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THE
SCHOOL-GIRL IN FRANCE,

OR

The Snares of Popery:

A

WARNING TO PROTESTANTS
AGAINST EDUCATION IN CATHOLIC SEMINARIES.

Fourth Edition.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

NEW-YORK:
PUBLISHED BY J. K. WELLMAN,
No. 118 NASSAU STREET
—
1845.

EDITORIAL NOTICES OF THE LITERARY EMPORIUM.

From the Boston Recorder.

"THE LITERARY EMPORIUM,—a compendium of religious, literary, and philosophical knowledge. New York: J. K. Wellman." The Numbers of this new work for January and February have been published, and the tables of contents are such as to do credit to the taste and judgment of the editor.

From the Maine Cultivator.

This is one of the best magazines of the day. It is a compendium of religious, literary, and philosophical knowledge, destitute of light literature, love tales, sectarianism, or other trash. Its religious matter is of such a nature as is calculated to cultivate, to inspire, and please a good and correct taste. In its literary character, a knowledge of man in his past and present condition will be inculcated; in science, the works of nature, miscellaneous reading that shall invigorate the faculties of the mind and elevate the character. Each number contains 32 pages, and a splendid plate is furnished as often as once in three months. Published monthly at \$1 per annum in advance.

From the New York Evangelist.

The "Literary Emporium" is the title of a cheap monthly magazine, published by J. K. Wellman, 16 Spruce street, price \$1. designed to be a compendium of religious, literary, and philosophical knowledge. It promises remarkably well. The Number for May deserves to be commended to youthful readers and to families as a judicious and healthful work in the department of useful, solid literature. It is attractive, neat, and very cheap, and pervaded by good taste and an excellent spirit.

From the Zion's Herald, Boston.

We have received No. 5 of this new monthly; it presents a fine table of contents, and is embellished by a superior engraving of Rev. John Summerfield.

From the Liberty Standard.

Several other numbers of this valuable monthly are received, and well sustain the character of the first. It should be valued in the family. Price \$1.

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THE

SCHOOL-GIRL IN FRANCE,

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The Snares of Popery:

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Second Edition.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER.	PAGE
I. The Letter.....	9
II. The Farewell Visit.....	13
III. A Roman Catholic School.....	19
IV. The Influence of Error.....	25
V. New Scenes and Dangers.....	33
VI. The Funeral.....	40
VII. The Pious Roman Catholic.....	50
VIII. The Grey Sisters.....	58
IX. The Youthful Backslider.....	62
X. Restoring Mercy.....	69
XI. Sunday Employments.....	75
XII. Romish Idolatry.....	82
XIII. The Nuns of St. Thomas.....	89
XIV. Claire de Liancourt.....	96
XV. The First Communion.....	103
XVI. School Persecution.....	109
XVII. The Hidden Snare.....	117
XVIII. Sunday Temptations.....	122
XIX. The Missionary Association.....	127
XX. Protestant Inconsistency.....	135
XXI. The Fête Dieu.....	140
XXII. Traits of Character.....	149

CHAPTER.	PAGE
XXIII. The English Teacher.....	156
XXIV. The Country Party.....	161
XXV. Sunday Trials.....	167
XXVI. True Friendship.....	174
XXVII. A Change of Residence.....	180
XXVIII. The French Protestant School.	186
XXIX. The Convent.....	194
XXX. Convent Scenes.....	200
XXXI. The Confessional.....	211
XXXII. An Unwelcome Guest.....	217
XXXIII. The Discussion.....	226
XXXIV. A Melancholy Event.....	233
XXXV. The Departure.....	240

PREFACE.

IN presenting the following narrative to the public, the author is fully conscious that it has many imperfections ; but she is anxious that a right estimate should be formed of its character. It is not a work of fiction, but a collection of facts, thrown together into one tale, with scarcely any additions, and few other alterations than those which were absolutely necessary, in order to disguise names, places, and dates.

It has fallen to her lot, to witness many of the evils attendant on the too common practice of sending young persons to the continent, at that very period of life when the mind is most unguarded, the feelings most susceptible, and the principles most uncertain. She has seen the snares spread for the inexperienced, the spells thrown over the warm imagination, the fascinations entwined round the youthful heart, by that most dangerous system of false religion, which, appealing with almost irresistible power to the senses, through them prostrates the reasoning faculties, and thus silently, but surely, weaves its fatal net around the unsuspecting victim. She has thus seen the foundation of a Protestant education sapped and undermined, till the promising fabric, reared by parental fondness, has been levelled with the dust, and the deluded parents left to mourn their alienated child a prey to the seductions of Popery, or the not less probable danger of unsettled principles, and practical infidelity.

It is, unfortunately, too much the custom with parents, to lull their minds into a false security on the subject, by requiring a promise from the Romish instructors, to whom they entrust their children, that no attempts shall be made to interfere with their

religion; and, satisfied with this assurance, they persuade themselves that there is no cause for fear. Alas! how greatly are they mistaken! The promises thus given are often *indirectly*, if not *directly* broken; and even where there is a conscientious adherence to the engagement, there are a thousand perils and snares, inseparably and *necessarily* connected with a residence among, and constant intercourse with, the votaries of the Romish heresy, which can only be avoided through the special interposition of a merciful Providence. Let such parents remember the daily prayer they teach their children,—“Lead us not into temptation,”—and the solemn warning addressed to them, by Him “who searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins,”—“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”

No Roman Catholic instructress could more conscientiously refrain from all *intentional* interference than Madame d'Elfort; yet the Author again assures her readers, that the evils she has attempted to describe, as resulting from a residence under her roof, are not, in any degree, either imaginary or exaggerated; neither are Madame d'Elfort, her establishment, and her pupils, at all fictitious. She could easily, and without any violation of truth, have deepened the picture with darker shades; she could have painted an unhappy father, deserted in his old age by two daughters, who had been taught that it was a meritorious work, and one which would secure their salvation, to bury themselves in the living death of a cloister, while by thus trampling on every filial duty, they brought down their parent's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. She could have sketched the affecting picture of a bereaved mother, whose heart has been broken, and her remaining days embittered, by the apostasy and undutifulness of an only child, once her joy and hope amidst a life of severe trial, and whose principles were gradually perverted by the inconsiderate indulgence of a Protestant governess, who unreflectingly allowed her occasionally to attend a Popish chapel, and thus exposed her to the snares and artful machinations of the Papists. But she forbears;—such instances have been but too frequent; her object was to point out the minute, every-day dangers connected with a Roman Catholic seminary, even under the most favorable circumstances; and she trusts she has said enough for that purpose. She hopes that Christian parents, who value the principles, the immortal

souls, the eternal interests of their children, will no longer send them forth "as sheep in the midst of wolves."

If there are any parents so ignorant of the religion they profess, as to imagine that there is but little real difference between Protestantism and Popery, and that it is of no consequence what we believe, if we are but sincere in that belief, the author would earnestly entreat them to study the Word of God with more attention, and prayer for the teaching of the Holy Spirit; they will then see that "there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved," but the name of Christ; "neither is there salvation in any other;" and that, as the church of Rome substitutes many other methods of salvation, and many other Saviours, in the place of Him "whom God has anointed," she is essentially an anti-christian church, and therefore to be dreaded, as the greatest enemy to genuine Christianity. And if they are members of the church of England, she begs to refer them to the xviiith Article of their church, in confirmation of her assertion.

Finally, she would say to all Protestant parents, whatever their peculiar sentiments may be, "If your children *must* go to France, place them at least in the hands of Protestants. There are many such establishments there, conducted by English instructors, where they may enjoy all the advantages of a French education, combined with the far more important benefits of religious instruction, on scriptural principles." If this simple narrative,—this "plain, unvarnished tale," should be made instrumental in preserving but one lamb of the Saviour's flock from the snares, pitfalls, and innumerable perils of a Popish school, she will thank Him "without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy" that her humble labor "has not been in vain in the Lord."

THE
SCHOOL-GIRL IN FRANCE.

CHAPTER I

THE LETTER.

Lead us not into temptation.—MATTHEW vi. 13.

It was a beautiful morning, in the early part of summer. The trees and fields were clothed with the loveliest verdure; the feathered songsters of the grove were warbling a hymn of gratitude to their beneficent Creator; the flowers seemed to breathe their sweetest incense to his praise; and every feature of the surrounding landscape wore the aspect of peace and joy.

This sweet serenity of nature diffused its calming influence over the minds of two young friends, as, with arms fondly linked, they slowly walked along a pleasant country-road, that led from their native village, within sight of the deep blue waters that roll through the British channel. Their thoughts were intent on subjects of deep importance to both; yet, for some time, neither had spoken a word.

"Dear Caroline," at length observed the elder, a pensive-looking girl of seventeen, whose dark eyes and hair gave additional interest to the paleness of her cheek, "how lovely, how very lovely is this scene! but, oh, how long it may be ere we again behold it!"

A smile of cheerful hope illumined the sweet countenance of her blue-eyed companion, as she replied, "My dear, drooping Emily, you must not yield to these foreboding fancies. A year or two will soon pass away, and I trust we shall then return to this beloved spot, with minds improved by instruction, and hearts expanded, but not corrupted. Our education will then be finished, and our principles more firmly fixed, by the experience we shall have had, of the superiority of truth over error."

"God grant it may be so!" exclaimed Emily, clasping her hands, in the energy of her feelings, "but I cannot altogether divest myself of a fearful apprehension, which makes me wish that our parents had not thought it necessary to send us to France, for that fashionable polish to our education, which is, after all, of so very little real value."

"Well," replied Caroline, "I cannot enter into your view of the subject. I am quite delighted with the prospect of the new scenes, characters, and manners we shall witness, and the various sources of knowledge that will be open to us; and I can fear no attraction in those empty, worldly pleasures, which we have already renounced, nor any danger in a religion, with the errors of which we are so thoroughly acquainted."

"Perhaps I am wrong," said Emily, after a pause; "perhaps there is too much unbelief and distrust in my present fears; but oh! Caroline, when I reflect on my own weakness and insufficiency; when I think how 'averse to good and prone to ill' my treacherous heart continually proves itself, and remember, at the same time, that I am soon to be exposed to those snares into which so many others have fallen,—I shrink back with involuntary alarm from the contemplation."

A deep sigh attested the sincerity of her fears, and she pressed her hand to her forehead in thoughtful dejection.

"Dear Emily," said Caroline, affectionately pressing her hand, "do not thus distrust the power and faithfulness of God; you know 'he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.' Remember how often dear Mr. Somerville has told us, that we could do nothing of ourselves, but that we must look to Christ, and there we should find help."

"You are right, Caroline," replied Emily, her countenance resuming somewhat of its usual mild, yet thoughtful serenity. "You know," continued she, smiling, "that I am a foolish creature; but I trust my Saviour's strength will be 'made perfect in my weakness.'"

The two friends had now reached a turning in the road, from whence they perceived a servant approaching, with a letter in his hand. He presented it to Emily, who received it with an expression of delight, which was re-echoed by her companion.

"Let us take the road through the fields, that we may be able to read it," exclaimed Caroline. "Dear, dear Mr. Somerville! was it not just like him to write immediately?—was it not just like a father?"

"He has, indeed, been a father to us," observed Emily, "and I am sure this kind letter is worthy of his exalted character, as well as of his sacred office."

It was, as she expected, an epistle full of pastoral admonition, and expressing the most friendly solicitude for their spiritual wel

fare. Mr. Somerville wrote in answer to a request they had made, that he would favor them with directions for their guidance in the land of strangers.

"As you tell me," said this excellent friend, "that your parents have permitted you to choose, for your school-residence, one of those favored spots in that spiritual wilderness, where the blessings of a scriptural ministry, and Christian fellowship, may be enjoyed, I feel much less concerned at your temporary exile than I otherwise should; at the same time that there is much less occasion for counsel, either from me or any other person. The directions you will find in your Bible, and in the other religious books that you will take over with you, joined to the instructions of the pastor under whose ministry you will sit, and the promised and implored guidance of the Holy Spirit, will, I am persuaded, render any body of rules, to be drawn up by me, altogether unnecessary.

"If, however, it will afford you any satisfaction, that I should express my sentiments on the occasion, I will tell you, that the chief danger I should apprehend for you, in any case, would not be from the *religion*, but rather from the *irreligion* of the country; and it is against the latter, especially, that I would entreat you to be *tremblingly on your guard*. No one ought, indeed, to feel secure from the seductive influence of false principles, in situations where those principles are daily presented to the mind, and where there is not that protection against them, which is afforded by a frequent intercourse with the professors of the truth, and a regular attendance on the simple and faithful preaching of the unadulterated gospel. But, with the knowledge you possess, of what the religion of Jesus is, and what the tenets of popery are: and taking, as I am persuaded you will do, *from the first*, a *decided* part for the one against the other, I do not anticipate that you will be in much danger, during your residence on the continent, of becoming Roman Catholics. There is something in every doctrine, in every circumstance connected with that religion, so contrary to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, so different from its *spiritual* nature and *soul-humblng* influence; and so discordant to the feelings of a renewed heart, which has deeply felt the necessity of a *free* and *full* salvation in him, that I trust you will be in no great peril from its otherwise fascinating power.

"I cannot say, however, that I am quite so easy with regard to the *power* of godliness, as I am in reference to the *form* of it. You will find it difficult, when living in the midst of ungodly society,—dwelling, as you most probably will, in an establishment where, with a superstitious regard to some externals, there prevails, notwithstanding, an habitual neglect of the *life* of religion; you will find it difficult, I say, when mixing continually with light, frivolous, and worldly-minded persons, however moral and

upright their character in other respects, to avoid losing that *taste*, that *relish* for spiritual things, which is, after all, the *grand essential*. Guard, then, chiefly against *this snare*; and ever keep in mind, of how little avail it would be that you should return to your country, Protestants in name and profession, and with an undiminished attachment to that 'form of sound words' in which you have been brought up, if, at the same time, you should no longer be devoted *in heart* to the service of him who now appears in our eyes 'the chiefest among ten thousand,' and the 'altogether lovely.' Such a conviction as this, joined with the use of the means to which it will naturally prompt, will form your best safeguard, and most effectual protection, under him whose grace and defence I most sincerely implore on your behalf."

"Keep near, I beseech you, my dear young friends, to that Almighty Saviour. Walk humbly and consistently with your God, and endeavor, above all things, by fervent prayer and diligent Bible-reading, to cultivate an uninterrupted communion with him, and a spiritual and watchful frame of mind. Oh! cling to Jesus with the ardor of faith, and you need not fear all the powers of hell combined. 'He will cover you with his wings, and under his feathers you will be safe; his faithfulness and truth shall be your shield and buckler.' I recommend the whole of that beautiful ninety-first Psalm to your frequent and attentive perusal.

"I pray that 'he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Christ.' To his merciful guidance I commit you both. May he not only 'keep you from falling,' but bless you with a very abundant measure of the influences of his Holy Spirit. May he 'shed his love abroad in your hearts,' enrich you with all the 'fruits of the Spirit,' and enable you ever to rejoice in your Saviour, 'with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.'

"Mrs. Somerville presents her most affectionate regards, and joins in every prayer for your spiritual prosperity, with

Your very sincere friend,

CHARLES SOMERVILLE."

"G—, 19th June."

CHAPTER II.

THE FAREWELL VISIT.

I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.—JOSHUA I. 5.

AFTER the conversation related in the foregoing chapter, it is unnecessary to say much of the previous history of Caroline Howard and Emily Mortimer. They were cousins, and had, from their infancy, been so much together, that the most sisterly affection and confidence subsisted between them. Their characters, indeed, were essentially different; but the contrast they presented only served to endear them more fondly to each other.

Caroline had been nursed in the lap of parental indulgence, and the sunny brightness of her disposition had scarcely been obscured by a single cloud. She possessed a softness and pliability of temper, which made her truly amiable; but her character was principally marked by an extreme susceptibility of feeling, which, in after life, might prove a dangerous snare.

Emily had lost her mother in early childhood, and this severe loss had been but ill supplied by a mother-in-law, who considered it a duty to thwart her every inclination, and to bring her up under a system of continual restraint and coercion. The perpetual vexations, and trials of temper, arising from this circumstance, had saddened a disposition naturally buoyant, and thrown a deep shade of thoughtfulness over the native enthusiasm of her character.

The cousins had been sent to the same school, in a neighboring town, and remained there three years. During that time they were brought under the faithful preaching of the gospel; a privilege they had never enjoyed before. The labors of Mr. Somerville had been greatly blessed to them; and through the influence of that Divine Spirit, who alone can make His own word effectual, they were enabled to devote themselves to the service of their God. The effects of this happy change were visible in the character and conduct of both. It regulated, without lessening, the extreme sensibility of the one, while it elevated and sanctified the ardent imagination and enthusiastic feelings of the other.

On returning to their paternal homes, they carefully treasured the many excellent counsels of their faithful and beloved pastor. They did not shrink from avowing their attachment to the principles of the gospel; but though they met with some opposition, and many petty persecutions, in the shape of temptation, ridicule, and vexatious annoyances, they endeavored, by an humble and consistent walk, to "adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things." They were, however, young and inexperienced, and felt that they greatly needed an Almighty arm to uphold them.

As the gospel was but little known in that part of the country, they considered it a peculiar privilege that, through the introduction of Mr. Somerville, they enjoyed the friendship of an elderly clergyman and his wife, whose distinguished piety, and Christian kindness, made their society and counsels invaluable.

Mr. Morton, who was rector of a neighboring parish, was a man venerable for his years and experience, respected for his uprightness and consistency, and beloved for his active Christian benevolence. There was a patriarchal simplicity in his manners, which peculiarly fitted him for the office he filled; and while the uncompromising faithfulness of his ministerial character pointed him out as the firm defender of evangelical truth, the kindness of his heart, and the assiduity with which, in imitation of his divine Master, "he went about doing good," proved him the sympathizing and affectionate father of his flock.

Mrs. Morton was, without exception, the most charming woman the cousins had ever seen. She was about fifty, remarkably pleasing in person, and affable in address. Her manners were elegant, yet perfectly unstudied; her countenance expressive of every benevolent feeling; and there was a nameless charm in everything she did—an inexpressible something, so sweet, so captivating, that no heart endowed with sensibility could resist its powerful attraction. It was the unaffected simplicity and candor, the warm and spontaneous kindness, of a heart overflowing with Christian love, that shed a holy benignity over her every word and action, and made her the object of enthusiastic affection, to all those who were privileged to call themselves her friends.

Emily and Caroline had now been some months at home, when they were suddenly informed that it was their parents' intention to send them for a year or two to a French boarding-school, for the purpose of completing their education in the language of that country. This, although the ostensible, was not the *only* reason that prompted this determination. This strange adoption of fanatical opinions,—as the change in their religious principles was called,—had been a source of much vexation to their respective families, and had disappointed many a long-cherished expectation; and it was hoped that an introduction to different scenes and pursuits, a removal from serious friends and associations, and, above all, an immersion in the gaieties of French society, would be successful in eradicating those impressions which every effort had hitherto failed to overcome; besides imparting that artificial polish to their manners, which the frequent intercourse with France had now rendered so fashionable.

Little did these short-sighted parents consider, or reflect on, the dangers to which they were thus exposing their children; they never once thought either of the religion or irreligion of the place to which they were about to send them. But not so Mr. and Mrs.

Morton. They saw the necessity of endeavoring to counteract the evil, and advised their young friends to request that they might be permitted to choose a school in the town of S—, where they knew that an English place of worship existed, and the unspeakable advantages of a gospel ministry, and a small circle of serious Christians, might be enjoyed. Emily and Caroline thankfully accepted the suggestion, and, after some difficulty, succeeded in obtaining their request.

They were on their road to Clifden parsonage, to visit these excellent friends for the last time before they left England, and once more listen to the blessed accents of Christian friendship and advice, when Mr. Somerville's letter arrived, with the important counsels they had requested. It furnished them with most interesting subjects of conversation, till the modest spire of Clifden church emerged to their view, from its surrounding screen of ancient and lofty trees.

A group of cottages and farm-houses, remarkable for their neatness, and their appearance of rustic comfort, encompassed this venerable edifice. It was of antique, and extremely plain architecture, and its walls were darkened by the hand of time. The church-yard was equally unadorned, and contained few monuments more elegant than the plain white tomb-stone, on which were simply engraven the name and age of the person whose remains it covered. But the grass that profusely mantled the graves was remarkably green and fresh, and the humble daisy, with its blossoms of silvery white, or slightly tinged with a shade of delicate pink, bespangled in wild luxuriance the peaceful abode of the dead.

Behind the churchyard was the parsonage; it was originally a low, rambling and irregular building, but one end of it had been rebuilt in a more modern style, for the convenience of its inhabitants, and though it had no claims to architectural beauty, presented an appearance of great neatness and comfort.

When the cousins opened the little white wicket-gate in front, their senses were immediately saluted with the perfume of the flowers, which grew in rich profusion round the smooth grass-plot; but the most delightful fragrance seemed to arise from the beautiful borders of thyme, which were then in full bloom. "Oh!" exclaimed Caroline, "how truly may this spot be called

‘The sweet abode of piety and peace!’

It seems to diffuse a holy calm over the mind; and its loveliness is indeed a striking emblem of its dear inhabitants."

Emily's heart responded warmly to this observation; but that heart was too full for utterance, and they silently proceeded to the house. Several beautiful pigeons, Mrs. Morton's favorite

protégés, started at their approach from the parlor-windows, on the outside of which they had just been feeding from their mistress's hand, and flew to their dwelling in the garden. A large and well-fed cat was basking in the sun before the door, and a pretty lap-dog ran to welcome the well-known visitors, with many a joyful bound, and many an artless caress.

Mrs. Morton received her young friends with unaffected kindness; Mr. Morton was absent, on one of his usual visits to his sick parishioners, but he soon joined the little party, and entered with lively interest into their conversation. Emily communicated to her friends the contents of Mr. Somerville's letter. Mr. Morton expressed the warmest approbation of them, but did not seem quite so fearless as his friend, on the subject of Popish influence. He had passed a part of his youth in France, and was consequently well acquainted with the danger. He therefore availed himself of the opportunity to give the cousins the most important cautions, and strongly exhorted them to be always on their guard.

"Remember, my dear young friends," said this venerable man, "that Popery is a religion which appeals most powerfully to the senses; which possesses every facility, from the seductive nature of its tenets, and the imposing splendor of its ceremonies, for dazzling the imagination, perverting the judgment, and ensnaring the heart. I apprehend no danger for you from its grosser and more palpable errors; but there are subtleties in its system, to which a young and ardent mind is peculiarly exposed,—and perhaps more imminently so, if it takes a deep interest in religion."

The rest of the morning was spent in this interesting conversation, and the cousins treasured up with gratitude his friendly admonitions. After dinner, Mrs. Morton invited them once more to take a walk to the sea-side, where, at a short distance from the parsonage, was a beautiful little bay, the romantic scenery of which excited the admiration of all who beheld it.

It is impossible to imagine anything more sweetly picturesque, than the road which led to this spot. The hills which rose abruptly on each side were clothed with delightful verdure, and formed between them a deep and lovely valley, diversified with pretty cottages, and small gardens carefully cultivated, and smiling in all the gay luxuriance of summer. A few sheep were peacefully feeding on the hills; and a small rivulet, after gliding for some time with a gentle murmur that was scarcely heard, rushed suddenly and noisily down the declivity, as if impatient to lose itself in the waters of the ocean. An abrupt turning in the road conducted to a rustic little mill, and beyond it the eye rested on the romantic features of the bay, with its fantastic groups of rocks along the shore, while the deep blue expanse of the sea terminated the prospect on that side.

Emily and Caroline walked by Mrs. Morton, each clasping an

arm of that amiable woman, and gazed on the scene with mingled feelings of pleasure, tenderness, and sorrow. They conversed on the goodness of him, who has clothed with so many charms this beautiful creation, and Mrs. Morton spoke, with the enthusiasm of deep feeling, of his tender love to his children—of his covenant-mercies to his chosen—to those who are interested in his Son's salvation. She dwelt on the kindness and compassion of that mighty and merciful Saviour;—his tender sympathy in the trials and sorrows of his people;—and his unchangeable faithfulness, which is pledged to be their eternal safeguard. "Like as a father pitieth his children," said she, "so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but was, in all points, tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He is our nearest, our tenderest, and most sympathizing friend, one 'who sticketh closer than a brother,' and who 'will never leave us nor forsake us.' 'Oh! how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!' How inexpressibly blessed are those who have this Saviour for their portion!"

Mrs. Morton's countenance glowed with animation, and her young friends hung on her every word with feelings of unutterable affection. They were now standing on the projecting brow of a cliff, which commanded an extensive view of the surrounding objects. They sat down on the soft grass, and contemplated the beauty of the scene. Beneath them lay the mighty ocean, unruffled as a peaceful lake; its rippling waves gently stealing over a bed of smooth sand, or dashing their harmless spray around the rocks that obstructed their progress. A few fishing boats were slowly gliding over its azure bosom, and the white sails of a ship in the distance agreeably contrasted with the sparkling waters. In the valley behind them all was peace and rural beauty; the sweet murmur of the falling stream; and the no less pleasing echo of the waves, were the only sounds that broke on the silence of the evening air.

Absorbed by the interest of their conversation, the three friends lingered in this beautiful spot, till the declining rays of the sun, tinging the clouds with purple and gold, warned them to return to the parsonage. As they were leaving their seat on the cliff, the cousins paused to take a farewell look, and their eyes were suffused with tears, as they thought on the time that must elapse, ere they could hope again to see this endeared and interesting spot.

The richest hues of sunset, as the great luminary disappeared behind the hills, had spread themselves over the horizon, and evening was "drawing her crimson curtains round," when they reached the parsonage. Mr. Morton was waiting for them, and they sat down to the tea-table. During this truly English meal,

the conversation of the morning was resumed, and the pious pastor, and his excellent wife, bestowed many a parting counsel on their youthful friends. But the shades of night closed around, and the moon, rising in silver radiance, warned Emily and Caroline that it was time to return home. Before they parted, however, they all knelt in fervent prayer, and Mr. Morton commended them to the protection of divine grace. He dwelt, with affectionate minuteness, on the nature of their case; their temptations, and their wants; and implored, with great earnestness, those blessings which were suited to their peculiar circumstances. He pleaded, with the ardor of faith, the rich and immutable promises of the gospel, and committed them to the care of their heavenly Father, with all the humble boldness of holy, filial confidence. The objects of his kind solicitude were bathed in tears during this affecting exercise; but a soothing hope seemed to diffuse itself over their minds, as the beautiful colors of the rainbow irradiate the gloom of a stormy sky.

Mr. and Mrs. Morton accompanied them to the foot of the church hill, where they were to enter the carriage. On emerging from the wicket gate, Caroline plucked some wallflowers from a large cluster, with which Mrs. Morton's hand had ornamented the hedge. Their delightful fragrance was increased by the evening-dew, and to her fancy they seemed to breathe of peace, of friendship, and of happiness. They crossed the churchyard in silence, for it recalled many affecting recollections. A few steps from the gate were two little grassy mounds, over which they had often bent on their way to the parsonage. Beneath their humble surface, unmarked by stone or name, slept in sweet repose the bodies of two infants. Once more they paused to look at these interesting graves, and almost envied the lot of their happy little tenants. They passed by the door of the church, through which they had so often accompanied Mr. Morton, on his return from performing divine service; and the tears of long-suppressed feeling flowed unrestrainedly, at the thought that they were now parting with those beloved friends, whom the uncertainty of life might prevent their ever meeting again on this side the grave.

"My dear children," said the minister, comprehending their emotion, and, in his usual fatherly manner, pressing both their hands in his, "forget not that you have a gracious and Almighty Friend, who is ever near you, and ever willing to 'help in every time of need.' Follow Mr. Somerville's advice,—keep near to that all-sufficient Friend, and carefully avoid every doctrine and practice, contrary to the holy and spiritual character of his gospel. Let the Bible be your standard, and try every sentiment by that infallible touchstone. Let your aim, in every action, be to glorify your God and Saviour; and remember that, if you should meet with any opportunity of being useful to others, by making known

to them that Saviour as he is revealed in his word, it is your duty to seize that opportunity, how unequal soever you may feel to the undertaking. And now farewell! and may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus."

"Oh! continue to pray for us, my dear, dear sir!" exclaimed the weeping girls, as they kissed the hand of the venerable man, which was kindly extended to bless them. Tears of inexpressible emotion stood in the eyes of Mrs. Morton. She pressed her young friends to her bosom, and with difficulty articulated—"Farewell! may the Lord bless you! write to me often, and 'Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation!'"

They parted without another word. Caroline threw herself back in the carriage, and sobbed with all the violence of unrestrained emotion. Emily covered her face with her hand, and found relief to her feelings in mental prayer. Thus they arrived at their respective homes, in sad and almost uninterrupted silence.

CHAPTER III.

A ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL.

In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.—*Matt* vii. 7.

THE next day, on which they were to set out, was one of great bustle and preparation. An unaccountable weight of dejection oppressed the mind of Emily; and a gloomy presentiment of, she knew not what, evil seemed to hover on the horizon of her future life. She had bidden her mother-in-law farewell; had cast a parting look at the scenes of her childhood; and, with her father, who was to accompany them to France, had repaired to her uncle's house, where they were to take up Caroline. Here she threw herself into a chair, scarcely able to control her feelings; but Caroline perceived her agitation, and, going up to the piano-forte, struck a few notes of the chorus of a hymn they had, a few days before, been practising together.

'Hallelujah! hallelujah! hallelujah!
We are on our way to God.'

The tremulous, but triumphant chords, started Emily from her painful reverie. She felt ashamed of her dejection, and accused herself of want of faith in the promises of God. She recollected an observation she had lately read,—that when Elisha had lost the advantage of Elijah's instruction and guidance, he did not sit down in despondency, or mournfully inquire, where is Elijah, "my friend, my father, my guide?" But he took the prophet's mantle, and smote the waves of Jordan, exclaiming, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" "It is true," thought she, "that I am about to lose, for a time, many of the outward privileges with which I have been favored; that I shall be, in a great measure, deprived of the blessings of Christian advice, encouragement, and communion; but I am not deprived of access to 'the God of all grace.' I am cut off from the streams, but I can still drink at the Fountain-head of all spiritual blessings." Her mind was cheered by this reflection; she thought of the Saviour's kind reproof to Peter—"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" and her heart tremblingly replied, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!"

The momentary feelings of enthusiasm which had animated the mind of Caroline, at sight of the words which so forcibly recalled the glorious end of the Christian's pilgrimage, had now given place to the sorrow of parting from her family. But it would be superfluous to describe a scene which every affectionate daughter will readily imagine. A few moments of uncontrolled emotion, and she was seated in the carriage, between her uncle and cousin, and borne rapidly away from the scenes of her childhood. At the nearest sea-port they embarked, and after a favorable, and, on the whole, pleasant voyage, safely arrived on the Gallic shore. Here the novelty of the scenes they witnessed, and the variety of incidents connected with travelling, greatly amused the two cousins, and made them disregard the total want of comfortable accommodations, which every English person must experience while passing through that otherwise delightful country. At length they reached the place of their destination, and proceeded to the house of Madame d'Elfort.

This was a highly respectable establishment, and the strangers were received with marked attention. After waiting a short time, they were introduced to the principal, and were much struck with her appearance. She was a tall majestic woman, with an imposing aspect, and elegant address. There was something so superior in her air, that it might well awe the young and timid strangers; but there was also a kindness in her manner, which could hardly fail of inspiring affection. Upright and conscientious in her principles, firm and undeviating in her conduct, her character commanded general esteem. She was endowed with considerable talents, and peculiarly fitted by nature for the manage-

ment of a school. Strict even to excess, in enforcing a constant observance of every rule: inflexibly just in the punishment of offences, yet not less kind and liberal in rewarding whatever she thought praiseworthy; anxious for the improvement of her pupils, and wholly devoted to the performance of her duties, she inspired the most profound respect, and exacted implicit obedience. Yet she knew how to unbend from the loftiness of her manner, without descending from her proper dignity; and there was a fascination in her kindness, which few young hearts were ever able to resist.

The establishment was very numerous, and consisted of both French and English boarders. To these she was equally just, and observed the most uniform impartiality of conduct. Herself a Roman Catholic, and perhaps one of the most devoted to her system of religion, she exacted from her French pupils the strictest performance of every rite commanded by their church; and offences of a religious character were always those which she punished with the greatest severity. She was zealous in promoting everything which could make Popery appear to her Protestant pupils in a favorable light; but, as she had pledged herself not to interfere with their opinions, she scrupulously avoided every *intentional* breach of that engagement.

A tolerably good understanding subsisted in the house, between the pupils of both denominations. Immediate expulsion was the penalty denounced against any attempt at controversy, and the subject of religion was therefore rarely introduced among them. The Protestants were allowed to attend the English chapel every Sunday morning, and to retire for a short time in the afternoon, for the purpose of reading the evening church service.

These particulars Mr. Mortimer ascertained, before he left his daughter and niece; as also that there was an English teacher resident in the house. Emily and Caroline were to have the privilege of a private bed-room, and to be allowed more liberty than the generality of their companions: in short they were to be what were called in the establishment *grandes pensionnaires*,—a term not exactly answering to the English idea of parlor-boarders, but somewhat analogous to it.

Mr. Mortimer then took his leave, and, bidding his daughter and niece an affectionate farewell, embarked the next morning on his return to England. The cousins shed many tears, on finding themselves thus left entirely among strangers; and Caroline, in particular, yielded to an excess of feeling which compelled Emily to exert herself, in order to comfort her. Their attention, however, was soon absorbed by the new scenes that surrounded them, and the necessity of conforming to rules of which, as yet, they knew nothing.

It was, indeed, a new world into which they were introduced, and one in which everything was widely different from all they

had ever known. They had been accustomed to a system of education, frequently varied by recreation, by amusement, and by every little indulgence that could render it agreeable, relieve its unavoidable monotony, and prevent it from appearing burdensome. But here education was indeed a toil, and frequently so laborious as to become truly insupportable, and even prejudicial to health. Constantly employed, from five or six in the morning till eight at night, with only one hour of relaxation during the day, and not unfrequently compelled to devote even that hour to study, the pupils looked forward with impatience to the time of their leaving school; as the slave would to the period of his final emancipation.

Those who were gifted with good abilities had, indeed, less difficulty in fulfilling their arduous duties; but lessons of thirty or forty pages of history; and from ten to twenty of geography, to be committed to memory, besides numberless other school-tasks, were certainly very formidable. Every personal consideration must be sacrificed to these absorbing studies, and even the necessary hours of sleep were often unavoidably encroached upon. And, to add to these discomforts, the poor girls were as constantly and closely watched as prisoners of state, and enjoyed none of those comforts which, to the natives of England, have become absolute necessities.

Emily and Caroline suffered much at first, from the various obstacles which obstructed their progress, but they had received from the hands of their Creator abilities of no mean description; and, as they felt the necessity of diligent application, these difficulties vanished by degrees, especially as they had few studies to begin entirely, and had already attained some degree of proficiency in most of the others. They were besides, as *grandes pensionnaires*, entitled to many advantages which their less fortunate companions did not possess.

One of these privileges was, the liberty of absenting themselves from morning prayers;—a circumstance which they found peculiarly agreeable; for, although the French boarders were obliged to attend mass before breakfast, and the Protestant pupils alone remained, yet they were not allowed to use a Protestant form, but were compelled to kneel round a French teacher, who read aloud a string of Roman Catholic prayers. These were partly in Latin, and altogether such as no conscientious Protestant could join in. This abuse of authority was repeated in the evening, and then no one was allowed to be absent, unless from illness.

This last service consisted of a number of short prayers, very few of which were addressed to God, and by far the greater part were not only unscriptural, but even blasphemous. It was some days before Emily and Caroline could understand them, for they were repeated with a rapidity which it was difficult to follow;

but, when once understood, they appeared sufficiently shocking. They were, indeed, begun and ended in the name of the adorable Trinity; but, not being presented through the intercession of the Redeemer, nor offered through His merits, they could not be acceptable to Him who has so repeatedly commanded us to ask everything "in his name." That blessed Saviour's name was scarcely used at all, in its proper sense; and his dignity, his character, and his work, were openly insulted.

There was a confession of sins, addressed to "God Almighty, to the blessed Mary, always a virgin, to St. Michael the Archangel, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter, St. Paul, and all the saints;" and this was followed by the request, that the aforesaid saints would "pray for them to the Lord their God." Emily and Caroline shuddered, as, kneeling with the others before a crucifix, they were compelled to hear this antichristian invocation. The former thought of that explicit declaration of scripture, "There is *ONE* MEDIATOR between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;" and she felt how awfully derogatory to his dignity, and offensive to his character, such supplications must be.

The next thing that excited her particular notice was a short prayer, followed by the 130th Psalm in Latin, "for the souls of the deceased faithful in purgatory; that God would grant them the forgiveness of their sins, and that they might soon enjoy that glory which he had destined for them in heaven." Emily was extremely shocked at this petition; for, besides its having no foundation whatever in Scripture, and being decidedly contrary to the express declarations of God, it was another insult to the perfect and finished work of the Redeemer. After this came a number of short prayers, addressed to St. Joseph, and several others; then one to the different saints whose name each person present bore, and another to each one's guardian angel. This last, in particular, was a masterpiece of blasphemy. It was in the following terms;

"O holy angel, whom God has entrusted with the charge of my conduct, I thank you for your kind attention, and entreat you to continue it. Assist me always in my necessities; console me in my afflictions; keep me from all occasions of sin; protect me especially at the hour of death; and conduct me to the kingdom of eternal glory."

"Where, then," thought Emily, "where is the necessity of prayer to God, if a created being, an angel, can do all this for us?" That awful moment immediately occurred to her mind, when the disembodied spirit is called to appear before its Judge, and when, if not clothed in the wedding-garment of the Redeemer's righteousness, and accepted through his blood, it must be "cast into outer darkness." She remembered the startling question of Job, "to which of the saints wilt thou turn?" and again shuddered, as her fancy portrayed the horrors of that dreadful instant. when, if

not renounced before, those "refuges of lies" would be so fearfully "swept away" by the justice of an offended God, and the righteous indignation of a long-slighted, and grossly-insulted Saviour.

To complete this catalogue of Popish prayers, there was a long litaney introduced, the first two or three petitions of which were addressed to Christ, and all the rest to the Virgin. If anything could surpass the blasphemous nature of the preceding prayers, this was admirably calculated to put the finishing stroke to the picture. The mother of Jesus was there addressed by several of those titles which can belong to none but himself. She was not only called the "mother of the Creator, mother of divine grace, queen of heaven, of angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and of all the saints," but also the "mystical rose," the "ark of the covenant," the "morning star," the "comforter of the afflicted," the "health of the infirm," the "help of Christians," the "REFUGE OF SINNERS," and the "DOOR OF HEAVEN!" The effect which these misapplied appellations produced upon Emily's mind was so painful; there was such a feeling of horror connected with the idea of their shocking falsehood, that she became cold and faint on hearing them for the first time, and immediately stopped her ears. This was an expedient to which she often felt it necessary to have recourse afterwards; and she found that it was very generally adopted by the English girls, in order that they might be able mentally to repeat their own prayers while they thus knelt, as it was the only time allowed them for that purpose.

Emily had read much on the subject of Roman Catholic errors, and was still more convinced, from the perusal of her Bible, that the Romish church was one which had widely departed from the truth. But this conviction was daily strengthened by everything she saw and heard, and she felt it her duty to pray earnestly for the benighted souls around her. She sought among the French boarders for some indications of real piety; for she knew that, although "the glory was departed" from their once pure and scriptural church, it still retained some of those truths which God has appointed as the means of salvation. She, therefore, hoped that among its dead leaves and withered branches, she might yet find some beautiful, though perhaps sickly, blossom of piety; some humble and sincere believer, whose mind, though clouded by error and superstition, might yet be so far enlightened by the Spirit of God, as to feel its need of a Saviour, and to cling with weak, but saving faith, to the gracious promises of the gospel. But, alas! she sought long in vain. Though many of the French pupils had attained the age of eighteen or nineteen, and some of them were considered exceedingly devout, she could not recognize in them any of those features which so distinctly mark the real child of God,—any of those beautiful "fruits of the Spirit," which

invariably adorn the renewed mind of a Christian. A strict attention to forms, and unmeaning ceremonies, was all they considered necessary to their eternal salvation; and their hearts were wholly engrossed by dress, amusement, and worldly vanities.

Disappointed in this part of her search, she turned to her English companions, but her expectations were equally crushed, on observing their characters and conduct. Some of these young ladies were extremely interesting in their appearance; but all were vain, worldly-minded, and thoughtless. They prided themselves on being free from the shackles of Popish superstition; but had they been requested to give one solid or scriptural reason for their difference in religion, it is very doubtful whether they could have returned anything like a satisfactory answer. They had been brought up as Protestants, and taught to despise the Roman Catholics for their superstition and image-worship; but they knew nothing of those doctrines which they thus pretended to reject, nor anything of that scriptural authority on which the Protestant church founds her purer system. They would have scorned the idea of danger, from the influence of Popish society or doctrines; yet they were everywhere surrounded by snares, which it was almost impossible for them completely to escape.

Such was the aspect of the school where Emily and Caroline were to spend at least one year. Their hearts sickened as they contemplated it; but Emily recollected Mr. Morton's words, and prayed that some opportunity might be vouchsafed them of glorifying their Saviour, by being useful to those around them.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INFLUENCE OF ERROR.

Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.—MARK vii. 9.

THE principles of young persons cannot be supposed to be very firmly fixed at the age of fourteen or sixteen; on the contrary, it is at that period that they most need the aid of judicious instruction, and the kind hand of enlightened piety, to direct their judgment, and guide them in the paths of wisdom. Yet it is generally

about that age that English parents send their children to France—send them into the midst of temptation and peril, without a single friend to watch over their conduct. They may not, indeed, be personally addressed on the subject of religion, nor may the least trouble be taken to pervert their minds; but there is a *silent, yet certain, influence* in the scenes around them, which will almost infallibly sap the foundations of a Protestant education. It is not from the most obvious errors of the Romish church that the greatest danger is to be apprehended, for these are easily detected, and not so likely to impose on a well-informed mind. But it is from the dangerous notions of human merit; of justification by works; of the possibility of deserving heaven; of the supposed distinction between *venial* and *mortal* sins, and a number of other errors equally pernicious; together with the profanation of the Sabbath, the disregard of the Bible, and the constant trifling with the name of God, which are so awfully common among the Roman Catholics; it is from these that everything should be feared, for a young and thoughtless girl, whose mind is naturally fond of novelty, and as naturally averse to everything spiritual; who seldom takes the trouble to examine for herself, or to try an opinion by the only infallible test of truth; who speedily adopts the sentiments and manners of those with whom she associates, and is easily dazzled by the splendor of outward ceremonies.

Emily was strongly impressed with this conviction, by observing the different incidents which daily fell under her notice. No attempts whatever were made to warp the minds of the Protestant pupils; yet that secret and irresistible influence of example did not fail to manifest itself. She soon had many occasions of combating Roman Catholic notions, in the minds of professed Protestants; and almost every day she heard them make use of Roman Catholic expressions.

The English girls were sitting together one Sunday evening after prayers, when Emily observed a conversation which appeared rather animated. Anna Luahington, a tall, elegant girl of sixteen, who had been particularly attentive to the new boarders on their arrival, was reprimanding her younger sister for having told her a falsehood.

"Indeed, Maria," said she, "it was very wicked to say so; and do you not know, you little naughty girl, that telling falsehoods is one of the seven *deadly* sins?"

Maria tossed her little head, in token of contempt; and Anna appealed to Emily for a confirmation of what she had said.

"It is indeed true," said the latter, "that falsehood is a very great sin; for the Bible says that 'lying lips are an abomination to the Lord,' and that 'all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone;' but I don't know what you mean, dear Anna, by 'the seven *deadly* sins,' I think that *all* sin is

hateful to God, as contrary to his nature, and a transgression of his laws, and therefore deserving of eternal condemnation."

"Dear me! what singular notions you have, my dear Miss Mortimer!" exclaimed Anna, with astonishment. "What! do you then suppose that those little trifling sins which we commit every day, are as bad as robbery, drunkenness or murder, or that they will be punished with the same severity?"

"They are not, indeed, so dreadful in their effects upon society," replied Emily, modestly; "but in the sight of a holy God they are equally criminal, as they proceed from that same 'carnal mind, which is enmity against him.' The Bible tells us that God is 'of purer eyes than to behold sin, and cannot look upon iniquity;' and that same God declares that 'the soul that sinneth shall die.' And allow me to tell you, Miss Lushington, that if the Bible speaks of no difference between *venial* and *mortal* sins, neither does the Protestant religion admit of any such distinction; and that I am surprised to hear a Roman Catholic error from the mouth of a Protestant."

"But I did not know that it was peculiar to the Catholics," said Anna, playing with the ringlets of her beautiful hair, to conceal the blush which slightly tinged her fine countenance. This conversation had attracted the attention of several other girls, and Fanny Gordon, a young lady who, from her uncommon abilities, was frequently called the phoenix of the school, immediately observed, that "she thought Miss Mortimer had a great dislike to the Catholics, as she was always saying something against their mode of worship."

"It is not so much their *ceremonies* that I have objected to, my dear Miss Gordon, as their *doctrines* and *principles*. Yet I am convinced, from the word of God, that their mode of worship is not less objectionable; and certainly nothing can be more unscriptural than some of those ceremonies. I need only mention the invocation of saints, and the worship of images, to prove the truth of my assertion; but I hope I have no dislike whatever to the Roman Catholics, as individuals."

"There, now see how uncharitable you are in your judgment, when you talk of their praying to the saints! I assure you they only do so to request the benefit of their prayers in heaven; and, as one of the teachers was saying to the French girls the other day, if we do not scruple to ask a friend on earth to pray for us, why should we not, with much more reason, entreat the prayers of our friends in heaven?"

Emily was surprised to hear this artful sophistry, from the lips of an English girl; but she replied, without hesitation, "if we admit that idea, Miss Gordon, we must believe that deceased saints are gifted with Omniscience, in order to hear and answer the petitions which are presented to them from so many different

places at once; yet that is an attribute which certainly belongs to God alone. But it is to the Bible we should look for the truth or falsehood of every doctrine; and though that blessed book commands *living* Christians to 'pray for one another,' it nowhere gives the least countenance to praying to departed saints. On the contrary, it asserts that there is but '*one* Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:' and surely, when the Son of God himself condescends to be our intercessor, it is offering the greatest insult to his character, his dignity, and his love, to seek for other mediators; as if he were not sufficient."

The glow of animation had crimsoned the usually pale cheek of Emily as she uttered these words; and Fanny Gordon felt rather confused, and did not know what to answer. At length, however, she resumed the conversation, by observing that, at all events, Miss Mortimer was very severe, when she accused the Catholics of worshipping images. "I asked Mademoiselle Laval yesterday," said she, "if it was true that they worshipped them; and she assured me it was quite a mistake, and that they only knelt before pictures and images, as a mark of reverence to the persons they represented."

"Ah! Miss Gordon," replied Emily, "it is a sad sign of a bad cause, when we are ashamed to own the truth. Wherefore, then, do they kneel to them? What more unequivocal mark of adoration can we possibly show to an object, than the action of kneeling to it? Do you not remember how awfully the Israelites were punished by God; for their image-worship?"

"Yes; but they *worshipped* those images, and the Catholics only look upon them as representations."

"Well, granting they only do so (which, however, is very doubtful) I do not think the Israelites did any more: when they made the calf in Horeb, they had but very recently seen a visible manifestation of the glorious presence of God; we cannot suppose that, after such an event, they could be so devoid of common sense as to believe that the golden calf they made was the same great and awful God; it must have been as a *representation* of him that they worshipped the molten image; and their crime was, therefore, precisely the same as the Roman Catholics are guilty of. Besides, the second commandment expressly forbids all such marks of reverence to images; and the Roman Catholics are so conscious of this, that they have excluded that commandment from the decalogue, and divided another into two, in order to complete the number. Is not *this* sufficient to stamp the character of reprobation on a church which takes such unwarrantable liberties?"

"But I tell you, Miss Mortimer," retorted Miss Gordon, coloring with offended pride, "that the Catholics disavow the *worship* of images or saints; and I think *they* ought to know their own religion best."

"My dear Miss Gordon," replied Emily, mildly but firmly, "I am extremely sorry to see you thus allow yourself to be deceived by this sophistry: but, whatever may be the real intention of the custom we have just been speaking of, it is a circumstance worthy of our most serious consideration, that the *second* commandment not only forbids the *avowed* worship of images, but explicitly adds also,—'Thou shalt not bow down to them!'"

Several of the young ladies seemed struck with this observation; but Miss Gordon was so much displeased at having been thus opposed, that she haughtily left the room, muttering very angrily some remarks about bigotry and uncharitableness.

It was not that this young lady had any particular predilection for the religion she thus warmly advocated; but she valued herself on that false liberality of sentiment which considers all religions as in themselves alike; and, having once taken up the cause, her pride would not suffer her to drop it, nor could her haughty spirit brook the idea of being contradicted and put to silence. Emily regretted the altercation; but she could not think of disguising her sentiments.

Another point on which she felt the necessity of being candid with her companions, was the manner of spending the Sabbath. The Roman Catholics considered that part of the day which they devoted to public worship, as the only time that ought to be observed or kept sacred. The services of the church were no sooner over, than they thought themselves at liberty to spend the rest of the day as they pleased; walking out, playing, singing, and dancing, were their usual resources, in the evening, unless they had long lessons for the next day, and then they would learn them instead of amusing themselves. Emily was shocked at this awful profanation of the sacred day by the Roman Catholics, but still more so, when she saw the Protestants, in a great measure, follow their example. They did not, indeed, go quite to the same lengths as the former; but when they had been to church in the morning, and read prayers together in the afternoon, they did not scruple to imitate their companions in buying fruit, cream, or pastry, and spending the evening in play, in looking on the sports of the others, or studying their usual lessons for the week.

They were struck with astonishment when they heard Emily blame their conduct, and remonstrate with them on the impropriety and sinfulness of these customs. Their prejudices were immediately up in arms against this troublesome censor; they loudly declared that they never had seen such a strangely scrupulous and gloomy creature, and that they would not suffer themselves to be ruled by so new and disagreeable an intruder. It was in vain that she disclaimed the least intention to rule or dictate; in vain that she reasoned with them, or intreated their attention to the sacredness of the Sabbath institution. They were highly

offended at her endeavors, and turned a deaf ear to all her arguments. She did not, however, give way to discouragement, or allow herself to be deterred from doing what she felt to be right. She earnestly prayed for a blessing on her endeavors, and renewed the subject whenever she found a favorable opportunity. She spoke seriously on the sanctity of the day, and the necessity and privilege of keeping it *holy* to the Lord; she used every means to persuade her companions, and intreated them, at least, to refrain from those glaring breaches of the fourth commandment, which are so highly offensive to God, and so dishonoring to the pure and scriptural religion they professed. In thus faithfully performing a painful, but positive duty, she frequently met with much opposition from those she wished to benefit; but the God on whose strength she relied did not leave her altogether without encouragement and success. Some of the young ladies at length yielded to the force of her arguments, and others to her pressing entreaties; the rest were ashamed to purchase on the Sunday, when their companions abstained from doing it; and, with a few occasional exceptions, she had, after some time, the unspeakable satisfaction of seeing them gradually abandon this wicked custom. She was inexpressibly grateful to Him who had thus deigned to make her an humble instrument of restraining *one* breach of his commandments; and, though the motives which actuated the young ladies in this instance were far from being so conscientious as she could have wished, she felt, notwithstanding, that she had much reason to "thank God and take courage."

It was not, indeed, an easy thing for a young girl, uninfluenced by religious principles, to resist the temptation of buying fruit and cream on the Sabbath. After a long, hot, and dusty walk, when they returned to the house, fatigued, exhausted, and perhaps tormented with thirst, these tempting refreshments were immediately presented to their view; and it required no small degree of firmness and resolution, to see the others indulging their taste for these dainties, and yet withstand the delicious allurements. Those who refused to buy were immediately teased by the others offering them part of their own purchase, and pressing them with the greatest earnestness to accept it. Emily and Caroline, of course, never were prevailed upon to do so; but the others often found it impossible to escape the snare. The French girls were not sparing of their ridicule, on these occasions, when they found that their arguments had no effect on Miss Mortimer; but she felt grateful that she was so far honored as to suffer this slight persecution for the cause of truth, and continued to bear a silent, but impressive, testimony against these sinful customs; a testimony which was not entirely without effect on the minds of her English companions.

The strange opinions of the new comers excited considerable

attention in the house ; and as a boarding-school may be called a miniature of the world, they were discussed and commented on in various ways, according to the different characters who took them up. Some pitied the "young enthusiasts," as they called them, for their gloomy notions ; others blamed and railed at them, as dangerous fanatics. By far the greater number took every opportunity of turning their principles into ridicule ; and some were sufficiently malicious to devise many artful plans, for overcoming their resolution, and frustrating their wishes. The conductors of the establishment were not uninterested in these occurrences. Madame d'Elfort and the teachers attempted to argue with Emily ; but, unable to confute her reasons, or alter her determination, they at last dropped the subject, and, by Madame d'Elfort's orders, the English were allowed to act as they pleased. "Surely," said that lady to Emily, as they were one day conversing on this topic, "when we have sanctified the Sunday by attending to all the observances required by religion, it cannot be sinful to amuse ourselves, or purchase those things which are so necessary for our refreshment."

"But, madam," replied her pupil, "we can easily do without those things, or we can procure them the day before. Whether we buy provisions or refreshments, an apple, or an article of dress, it is always the same action of buying ;—it is always encouraging those who sell in transgressing the commandments of God. Besides, if the practice would be wrong (as you allow it would) during the hours of public worship, it must be equally sinful afterwards ; for we are commanded to keep the *Sabbath day* holy, and not any particular part of it."

"You must certainly be too scrupulous, even for your religion," observed Madame d'Elfort, "for I have known several English persons, who were considered *very pious*, and who yet had no hesitation in buying any sort of refreshment on the Sunday. It was but a few days ago, that I mentioned your way of thinking to Miss Stanhope's mother, who, I believe, is a very religious woman ; and she told me, that she had no objection whatever to purchasing as we do."

"Are these people Protestants ?" thought Emily, as the crimson of indignation mounted to her cheek. She felt that it might be thought unbecoming in a girl of her age, to censure those whose years and experience were so much superior to her own ; yet she could not bear to leave this impression on the mind of a Roman Catholic, and thought she ought not to shrink from the vindication of truth, even at the risk of being called presumptuous. She, therefore, replied modestly, but with animation.

"Pardon me, my dear madam, if I seem bold in speaking so plainly. Far be it from me to judge the characters of my fellow-creatures ; but you must allow me to say, that those are certainly

not pious who so flagrantly transgress the injunctions of the Bible, and so shamefully disregard the precepts of their religion. They may indeed be regular in the performance of some of its duties, and attentive to some of its outward forms; but the voice of unerring truth condemns their conduct, and rejects their claim to the character of Christians. The Lord Jesus Christ has declared, 'not every one that saith unto me Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.'

Emily was much agitated as she pronounced these words; and Madame d'Elfort looked surprised, though not displeased. She was silent for a few moments: then, kissing the cheek of her pupil, she kindly said, "Well, my dear child, I admire and respect your sentiments, though I should not like to adopt them. However, since it gives you pain to see the English buy anything on a Sunday, I shall not encourage them to do it, but leave them to make their own decision."

"Deplorable infatuation!" exclaimed Emily to herself, as she pensively bent her way towards her own room. "Whatever *the church* commands must be observed and obeyed, though it should be expressly contrary to the commands of God himself; and they openly disobey those commandments, because *the church* sanctions their doing so! However, *they* cannot judge of his will, since they are not allowed to read the Bible; but how shall those answer for their conduct, who bear the name of Protestants, and have free access to the word of truth, yet thus wilfully disgrace their profession, and knowingly trample on the gospel?"

This was not a solitary instance of the dishonor brought upon religion, by the conduct of the English residents in S—— and its vicinity. Emily frequently heard the most painful accounts of them. It is a melancholy fact, that a great number of those who take up their abode in France abandon their religion with their country, and adopt all that is pernicious in French customs and manners. Every kind of folly and extravagance is but too common among them; and even those who maintain a character of probity, and decent regularity, generally fall into the sentiments and habits of those they live with. The most awful profanations of the Sabbath are constantly practised by these *soi-disant* Protestants; and the words of Christ are indeed strikingly applicable to them—"Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

CHAPTER V.

NEW SCENES AND DANGERS.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.—*MATT. xvi. 41.*

EMILY was particularly shocked one evening, by a conversation which took place in her presence, between Miss Gordon and Miss Stanhope, an English weekly boarder, on the latter's return from a visit to her family.

"And do you know, Fanny," said Catharine Stanhope, after having given her an account of several gay parties she had heard of, "that there was a ball last Sunday at the Mayor's house in the country? The Misses Lloyd were there, and they told mamma it was very brilliant, and that they kept it up till four in the morning."

"The Misses Lloyd!" exclaimed Caroline Howard, with surprise; "is it possible that English Protestants can go to Sunday balls?"

"Why, yes, to be sure," replied Catharine, "but they did not dance, you know, so long as the Sunday lasted, but merely sat and looked on till the clock struck midnight, and then they got up, and danced till the ball broke up."

"For my part," observed Anna Lushington, "I think they might as well have danced all the time, as looked on; for their heart was as much in it, as that of the persons who were dancing."

"They forgot, no doubt," said Emily, "what the Bible declares, that 'God is not mocked;' or rather, perhaps, they never read the Bible at all."

"La!" exclaimed Catharine, "there was nothing very strange in their going to the ball; but you have such odd notions, Miss Mortimer and Miss Howard! Why, there was a grand masquerade the other Sunday, at Mr. Sackville's; and there is to be a ball at Mrs. Dixon's next Sunday evening."

"But all this does not lessen the sin, my dear Miss Stanhope. The curse of Sabbath-breaking is fearfully hanging over those who do such things; and it is a very awful truth, that while the servant who knew not his Lord's will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes,—he who knew and transgressed that will, shall be beaten with many stripes."

The young ladies looked at each other, and Catharine and Fanny exchanged a smile of contempt. The conversation ended here; but Emily long reflected, with much painful feeling, on the conduct by which the Protestant religion was thus deeply wounded, by the hands of its pretended friends.

There was a spiritual gloom resting on every object around her,

which pressed heavily on her heart, and was very distressing. It was not long, however, after the foregoing conversation, that a bright ray of heavenly light shed its sweet influence over the scene. She had looked anxiously, but in vain, around her, for some indications of seriousness among her companions; but she now found that the fragrant bud of youthful piety was concealed in a spot, where she had given up all hopes of meeting with its lonely beauty.

In order to acquire that facility and fluency in speaking the language, which were considered so necessary to complete her education, she was compelled to mix as much as possible with French society, however uncongenial to her feelings. She was sitting one evening at a work-table, which was surrounded by French girls, and where Mademoiselle Laval was reading aloud Madame de Genlis's work, entitled "*Les Veillées du Chateau.*" The reading was, every five or six minutes, interrupted by the observations of the young ladies, who expatiated, with that volubility so peculiar to their nation, on the incidents of the tale, and the merits of its different characters. The personage then under review was a young man who having left his native country for the purpose of travelling, often looked back with longing regret to the scene of his former enjoyments, where he had left an affectionate father, and a young person to whom he was shortly to be united. One of his expressions of impatience, to see again this beloved spot, was couched in language so pathetic, and pronounced by the teacher with a tone of such ludicrous sentimentality, that the whole party, with two or three exceptions, were almost convulsed with laughter. This merriment continued for some time, with almost unabated gaiety, till one of the young ladies exclaimed, addressing another who sat beside her, "Well, really, Rose de Liancourt, I cannot imagine how you can preserve such a composed gravity of countenance, while listening to so laughable a subject."

"Indeed, to tell you the truth," replied the young person to whom she had spoken, "I am not sufficiently penetrating to discover what it was which made you laugh so much, nor can I see anything ludicrous in the earnest wishes expressed by a dutiful son, to see again the land where he has left a kind and indulgent parent."

At this observation, the bursts of laughter were renewed; and the artless simplicity of Rose became the subject of so many giddy remarks, that she looked quite disconcerted. Mademoiselle Laval not a little increased her embarrassment, by exclaiming, "Upon my word, our Rose is really charming! she is so naïve and unsuspecting, that I verily believe she has not even the least idea of any other sentiments than those of filial and fraternal affection."

"Oh! charming, charming!" exclaimed Clémentine Vermont,

with a malicious sneer, "such simplicity is truly edifying, and quite worthy of Saint Rose."

The sarcastic manner in which these last words were uttered seemed considerably to irritate the mind of the young lady who was their object. She looked extremely hurt; the blush which had overspread her countenance heightened to a deep crimson, and the tears started to her eyes; but she controlled her emotions by a strong effort, and received the observation, and the general laugh which it excited, in perfect silence.

Emily's attention had been powerfully arrested by this little incident, and she could think of nothing else all the rest of the evening. She looked at Mademoiselle de Liancourt, and wondered that she had never noticed her before. This young lady slept in a room adjoining her own, and they had occasionally bowed, as they passed each other; but there was something so retiring, so unobtrusive, in her appearance, and she mixed so seldom with the gay circle which every evening surrounded the work-table, that Emily scarcely knew her name before, and had never been led to pay her any attention. That evening, however, seemed to present her in a most interesting light; and as Emily took a favorable opportunity of observing her countenance, she thought she had seldom met with a more pleasing one. It bore a striking expression of mild seriousness, candor, and humility; her soft dark eyes spoke of modesty and gentleness, and her fine chestnut hair, neatly braided on her forehead, added to the elegant simplicity of her appearance.

There was some hidden meaning attached to the mention of Saint Rose, which Emily felt extremely curious to know; and she discovered the next day that this was a term of reproach, bestowed on this young lady on account of her peculiar seriousness, and conscientious attention to all those precepts which she was taught to regard as the rule of a Christian's faith and practice.

This information, it will naturally be supposed, not a little increased the interest which her appearance had excited in the mind of Emily. Delighted at the idea that there was *one* serious Catholic in the house, she seized the first opportunity of forming an acquaintance with the unassuming Rose. This she found no difficulty in doing, for, though of a timid and retiring disposition, Mademoiselle de Liancourt possessed, in an eminent degree, that refined politeness of manners, and unaffected kindness of heart, which ought ever to distinguish the character of a Christian, especially of a well-educated one. A number of little friendly services were interchanged between them, and they soon contracted a pleasing intimacy, which a greater knowledge of each other only contributed to heighten and endear. There was a remarkable congeniality of tastes, feelings, and pursuits, between these two young persons; and there was but *one* point on which

they could not sympathize; but one subject on which they could not converse with mutual and unreserved confidence.

That one subject, alas! was precisely that which was most interesting to the hearts of both; the *only one*, indeed, which they felt to be of any real importance. They were both sincerely devoted to religion, yet they durst scarcely mention the word to each other; for the rules of the establishment strictly forbade any discussion, and it was difficult to enter on so delicate a subject, without trespassing the bounds which policy had prescribed. A general observation, *en passant*, or a guarded expression now and then, was therefore all they could venture upon; and this circumstance threw a great deal of constraint over their otherwise delightful intercourse.

Emily and Caroline had as yet seen but little of Popish ceremonies; they had found much scope for observation, but knew nothing of that seductive influence which so peculiarly accompanies the ordinances of the Romish church. A circumstance, however, soon occurred, which strikingly recalled to the mind of Emily the warnings of her anxious friends at the Parsonage.

They were taking a lesson of vocal music one afternoon, with several French pupils, when one of the teachers suddenly entered the room, and, in a low voice, requested the master to suspend the singing, as the "*bon Dieu*" was every moment expected to enter the house. The cousins looked at each other in silence; they knew that "the good God" was the term usually chosen to designate the Almighty; and, as they were totally inexperienced in Roman Catholic customs, felt utterly at a loss to account for so extraordinary an intimation. Before they could form any conjecture on the subject, the same teacher re-entered, and whispered something to the master; the door was immediately thrown open, and the whole party advanced towards it. Emily and Caroline imagined they were called upon to leave the room; but what was their astonishment, when they saw all the young ladies fall on their knees. Unable to guess the reason, and confused by the suddenness of the action, they almost involuntarily followed their example; but a moment's reflection recalling to Emily's mind the imprudence of such an action, she hastily started up, and Caroline also rose. At that instant a sudden glare of light burst upon their sight,—an unaccountable terror took possession of their minds,—a cloud of incense rose from the stairs,—and overcome by the agitation of the moment, they lost all self-possession, and again sank on their knees. Two men now appeared, each bearing a lighted taper; another followed them with a censer, and a small bell, and then came a priest, carrying a little silver box, in which was enclosed a sacramental wafer, the object of all this display. They were going to administer the last rites of their church to one of Madame d'Elfort's servants, who, having

languished for some time under an alarming disorder, was that evening to submit to a painful and dangerous operation.

When the pageant had passed, and the cousins recovered their recollection, they felt excessively ashamed at having thus allowed themselves to be surprised into what they could not but consider as at least the *appearance* of idolatry.

Emily was particularly vexed at this occurrence, as she observed that the French girls considered it a triumph; but Caroline was so overpowered by its effect, that her agitation was extreme during the rest of the day. "My dear girl," said her cousin, "let this be a warning to us; let it teach us to be more on our guard against the power of our senses. Do you not remember dear Mr. Morton's admonitions, on the influence of Popish ceremonies? Let us watch and pray more against it, or we may again be betrayed into actions which we must deeply regret and repent of."

On their return to the school-room, they found Madame d'Elfort looking much affected. She had been mentioning to her pupils the case of the poor servant above, and every cheek had turned pale with compassion and terror. "My dear children," continued she, "let us all unite in saying a paternoster for the poor creature and implore for her the help and support of God and the blessed Virgin." They all knelt accordingly; and while the hearts of the cousins were lifted up, with the most intense earnestness, to the "Father of Mercies and the God of all comfort," that he would grant the agonized sufferer strength and grace equal to her need, Madame d'Elfort repeated aloud the Lord's Prayer and the Salutation to the Virgin, in which she was joined by the French pupils. "Alas!" thought Emily, "what a miserable refuge for a dying sinner! 'The God of Israel is he who giveth strength and power to his people;' is it not, then, grossly insulting him, to ask from a glorified creature that support which he alone can bestow?"

The young ladies had been so much shocked by the idea of the surgical operation which the poor woman was then undergoing, that not one had ventured a question as to its probable result. Before retiring to rest, however, as Mademoiselle Laval entered Miss Mortimer's room, Caroline tremblingly inquired how she had gone through the trial? "Compose yourself," replied the teacher, with much feeling, "the poor sufferer suffers no more." "She is dead, then!" exclaimed Caroline, clasping her hands in breathless emotion. Mademoiselle Laval replied that she had just expired.

"Dead!" repeated Emily, mournfully, as the teacher closed the door, "gone to receive her final sentence, and how? Perhaps her mind was so fatally blinded, as to place an implicit reliance on superstitious ceremonies for her salvation, and neglect the only

scriptural refuge for a guilty creature,—that Almighty Saviour, who alone can enable the sinner to stand with confidence before his Judge! *O! did she know that Saviour?*” inquired her anxious mind; but to that solemn, that awful question, she could receive no answer. ~~She~~ tried to leave the case in the hands of Him who is the judge of the quick and the dead; yet still her fancy dwelt on the poor woman’s excruciating sufferings; and when she thought of the fearful uncertainty that rested on her fate, her heart seemed to die within her. Caroline laid her head on her pillow, and wept in silent emotion.

The English girls were very much amused when they heard of the effect which the sight of the host had produced on the minds of the new comers. The frequency of these exhibitions had rendered them familiar to their eyes; and whenever the French boarders knelt, they quietly kept their seats. They informed Emily and Caroline, that kneeling was considered so indispensable, as a mark of respect to the host, that whenever the bell, which always preceded it, announced its approach, no Catholic could be exempted from the obligation, should he even be compelled to kneel in a muddy street.

“Is it possible you do not see,” said Emily to Miss Lushington, “that all these ceremonies, however superstitious they may be, have a very strong hold on the senses and the imagination?”

“I certainly did find them very striking at first; but now they only excite a feeling of ridicule.”

“I think, dear Anna, they should rather excite sorrow and pity; but I am persuaded that a residence here cannot but be highly dangerous.”

“Not to me, however,” replied Anna, smiling with much self-complacency, “for I know those things are very foolish; and some of the last words papa said to me, when I left him, were, ‘Remember, Anna, that you must not listen to anything the Roman Catholics may tell you in favor of their religion.’”

“Poor girl!” thought Emily, “what an insufficient safeguard! *she must not listen!* but she cannot avoid hearing; and yet this is all the protection that is thought necessary, by an English parent, for a young girl totally ignorant on the subject, and reckless of the hidden snare!”

The English teacher resident in the house was a striking example of the dangers incident to the place. She had been brought up a Protestant, but had mixed a great deal in French society, and at length adopted all its opinions and customs. Madame d’Elfort had had no share in producing this change; but Miss Parker had gradually forsaken the Protestant cause, without, however, decidedly adopting the religion of the country. She had renounced all fellowship with the English, constantly attended the Roman Catholic church, and was generally looked upon as a

having changed her religion ; yet she had made no public abjuration ; she never confessed to a priest, nor did she use the sign of the cross, which was considered the distinguishing mark of a Roman Catholic. Her conduct frequently excited considerable curiosity, and gave occasion for numerous animadversions. "It is thought very extraordinary," said Anna Lushington, as she and Emily were one day conversing on the subject. "I should think it truly contemptible," observed the latter ; "for if Miss Parker really prefers the Romish religion, why does she not make a candid and unequivocal profession of its doctrines ? It would, at least, be acting *honestly*, which at present she cannot be said to do."

"Some of her friends excuse her," resumed Anna, "by alleging that she is fearful of giving offence to the Protestants ; and that, in order to avoid public *éclat*, she prefers maintaining a sort of neutrality."

"What a wretched excuse !" exclaimed Emily, indignantly ; "believe me, my dear Miss Lushington, there can be no neutrality in religion—the Bible allows of none. 'He that is not *with me*,' says Christ, '*is against me*:'—and surely, surely, Miss Parker does much more real injury to religion, and gives much more offence to every true Protestant, by such temporizing, such unworthy conduct, than she could do by an open desertion."

Miss Parker evidently wished to avoid all unnecessary intercourse with the English pupils, and her company was therefore never sought by them. She found herself obliged, one Sunday, on her return from the Cathedral, to pass through the room in which they were assembled for afternoon service. The prayers were finished, and Emily was just reading the text of a deeply-interesting sermon, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." She raised her head on hearing the door open ; her eyes met those of Miss Parker, and she repeated, with a kind of imploring emphasis, "*Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*" But the ear to which these words were addressed was deaf to their touching import ; the heart they were meant to reach was closed against their subduing power ; Miss Parker turned her head scornfully away, and hurried across the room, as if she had fled from a serpent. "Alas ! poor unhappy wanderer !" thought Emily, "to whom will she go, if she thus turns away from Him who has the words of eternal life ?" She was much affected by this reflection, and could never pronounce that sweet petition of our truly scriptural Litany, "That it may please thee to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred, and are deceived," without painfully remembering the case of poor Miss Parker.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FUNERAL.

He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.—PSALM xci. 3, 7.

CAROLINE and Emily had resided about three months in France, when the former received a letter from her father, containing the intelligence that her sister Lydia's health had been for some time delicate, and that the medical attendant having strongly recommended her being removed to a more genial climate, her parents had resolved to send her to S——, and make her the companion of her sister's studies. Mr. Howard was therefore to escort her to France immediately; and, before Emily and Caroline had recovered from the surprise, and the mingled feelings, excited by this information, the two travellers arrived at Madame d'Elfort's mansion.

The joy which Caroline experienced, on the arrival of her father and sister, was considerably damped by the feelings of apprehension excited by the pale countenance, and evident weakness, of the latter. As soon, however, as she had recovered from the fatigue of travelling, Lydia's health began gradually to improve; she felt the benefit of change of air, and a more settled temperature; and, as her strength began to return, her buoyant spirits recovered their usual flow. Mr. Howard remained at S—— till he saw this favorable change, and then left his daughters and niece to their scholastic duties.

He had also brought Madame d'Elfort two other English pupils—the daughters of a clergyman who resided a few miles from Ellerton, and who, being unable to leave his parish for any length of time, had requested Mr. Howard to take them under his care. Emma and Louisa Selwyn were twins, and about fifteen years of age; they had enjoyed the unspeakable blessing of a religious education, and had been taught to make the gospel the rule of their faith, and the guide of their life. Their parents were pious people, and had not sent them to France without much hesitation and reluctance; but, having heard a favorable account of Emily and Caroline, from the Rev. Mr. Somerville, Mrs. Selwyn, though totally unacquainted with them, wrote to request their friendship and advice for her daughters, and Mrs. Somerville also strongly recommended them to her young friends. Emily was delighted at the prospect of having an increase of serious companions, and welcomed the two amiable sisters with much warmth; nor was Caroline backward in kindness towards them.

The second day after their arrival also witnessed that of two other English pupils. One was a little girl of twelve or thirteen, of a pleasing, lively countenance, and great *aisance* of manners; the other was about sixteen, and had a peculiarly prepossessing appearance. The French girls, who considered beauty as the most excellent and desirable thing in a young person, were immediately enchanted with her face and figure, and expressed their admiration in the most rapturous language; for Helen Douglas was a very lovely girl, and few young persons could be more attractive. They praised the light elegance of her form, the delicate transparency of her complexion, the pleasing harmony of her features, and the profusion of her fine auburn ringlets; but our English girls were particularly struck with the sweetness of her countenance, the modesty and gentleness of her demeanor, and the pen-sive softness of her manners. They were extremely kind and attentive to the interesting stranger, and used every endeavor to cheer her drooping spirits; for she was almost overwhelmed with grief, at quitting her parents and her home. For some days she seemed to refuse everything like comfort; but these painful impressions wore away by degrees; she became resigned and tranquil, and attached herself in a peculiar manner to Emily and her little circle.

It would have been amusing to an unconcerned spectator, to observe the different effects which the new scenes around them produced on the minds of these young persons, and the various ways in which they were affected, by the mode of life they were obliged to adopt. Lydia Howard, with all the warmth of a romantic fancy, had pictured to herself a scene of ideal delight, in the enjoyments connected with her residence at school; but, in proportion as her expectations had been raised to an unreasonable pitch, was the bitterness of her disappointment. She had scarcely entered the house before she found it dull and gloomy, the mode of life insupportable, the French inhabitants disagreeable beyond description, and, in short, everything contrary to her pre-conceived ideas. She sometimes manifested the greatest impatience of control; but the excessive gaiety of her disposition, the conviction of her duty, and the comfort of having her sister and cousin with her, enabled her to support, with tolerable fortitude, what she, nevertheless, disliked in the highest degree. She frequently amused her friends by her humorous sallies, consisting of passionate invectives against the place, mingled with ludicrous descriptions of French manners, wild flights of an ungovernable fancy, and half-comic, half-pathetic invocations to home. Yet she was truly amiable, and the favorite of everybody.

Emma and Louisa Selwyn were much less annoyed by the change, than the lively and susceptible Lydia. Their characters were less subject to extremes than hers and they were more easily

reconciled to the want of English comforts. Emma was an agreeable and lively girl, of an easy and complying disposition, and soon seemed more at home in her new situation than even her friends could have wished. Louisa had more faults than her sister, but she had also more energy of character. She was gentle, but high-spirited; and, though too often yielding in things of apparently small importance, when roused to exertion, she could display a considerable degree of decision. She possessed a happy evenness of temper, and an uninterrupted flow of cheerfulness, which very agreeably smoothed her path through the briery maze she had to tread, and blunted the point of many a thorn, which would otherwise have impeded her progress.

Agnes Beverley, the little girl who had arrived on the same day as Miss Douglas, was greatly astonished by the new scenes which surrounded her, but it was not long before she experienced their pernicious influence. She had been brought up by parents who made a profession of religion, and were really good, though exceedingly injudicious people. They had given her excellent advice, but had not curbed the impetuosity of her disposition; nor had they labored, with sufficient earnestness and vigilance, to give her affections a *heavenly* direction. She was heedless, giddy, and fond of pleasure; obstinate, proud, and conceited; and so exceedingly unsettled in her principles, that she readily embraced the opinions and sentiments of those with whom she associated. She manifested, at first, a great deal of impatience, at the restraints she was obliged to submit to; but, when once accustomed to the place and its inhabitants, yielded to their customs on almost every occasion; and, though she had once seemed extremely susceptible of serious impressions, she soon fell into the snares that surrounded her, and forgot the maxims of her education, whenever her principles were put to the test.

Helen Douglas was not a serious girl, but she was amiable and well disposed. Her feelings and tastes were so entirely *English*, that she was perfectly disgusted with French manners, and could never assimilate with characters so little in unison with her own. Yet she bore with much patience the little inconveniences attached to her situation, and was much more reconciled to its restraints, than the impetuous, but warm-hearted Lydia. Her character was remarkably reserved, and, therefore, she was not long a favorite with the giddy and talkative French girls. Even with her friends, this fault, if it might be called one, was frequently a bar to unrestrained conversation; it gave her an appearance of coldness, and often passed for indifference. Yet there was a mildness in her disposition, and, at times, a natural playfulness in her manner, which made her truly beloved by those who knew how to appreciate her character.

Our young friends contrived to be as much together, as the na

ture of their situation would permit. This was not always easy, for the system of incessant *surveillance* adopted in the school left them very few opportunities of eluding its severity. "Oh, what a miserable place is this!" would Lydia often exclaim; "we are really watched as closely as if we were prisoners, who had been guilty of some great crime. It is very hard that one cannot be a single moment alone in the garden, in one's bed-room, or indeed anywhere, without being liable to reproof. What harm could we possibly do alone, or two or three together, in such a house as this?"

"This continued vigilance," observed Emily, "is the result of that excessive restraint, under which it is thought necessary, in this part of France, that young persons should be educated. It is considered dangerous to allow them, for an instant, to escape the eye of observation; and therefore you are required to be always assembled in one place, and under the continual inspection of a teacher."

"O happy, happy England!" exclaimed the animated Lydia; "blessed land of freedom and of peace! where girls of fifteen or sixteen are looked upon as rational beings, and capable of distinguishing between right and wrong;—where they are taught to respect themselves, instead of being constantly suspected;—where they are gently led into the paths of virtue, without being subjected to the degrading coercion, which is more likely to disgust than to benefit their minds. England! dear England for ever!" continued the youthful enthusiast, waving her hand in rapturous ecstasy; "I would not exchange the privilege of being an English girl, for all the wealth of the Indies, or all the boasted advantages which France is so proud of possessing."

Emily laughed at these lively sallies of the impatient girl; but, though she brought forward every motive which could reconcile her to her lot, she herself frequently felt the unpleasantness of her own situation. It was not often that she could enjoy the company of her friends, in such a manner as to allow of unrestrained conversation; but when the privilege was granted, it was a pleasure which amply repaid her for many a day of privation.

"Miss Mortimer! Miss Howard!" exclaimed Agnes Beverley, running into the room one morning, as Emily was busily engaged in sketching a landscape, and Caroline, leaning against an open window, and absorbed in unusual thoughtfulness, was silently contemplating the garden below,—“how quietly you are sitting in this back room, while everybody else is crowding to the front gate! Why, don't you know what is going on this morning? and are you not desirous of seeing the procession?"

"What procession?" inquired Emily, looking up from her drawing, while Caroline turned hastily round, and seemed as if trying to collect her bewildered thoughts.

"Why, a funeral, to be sure—a grand funeral! The French say it will be a most beautiful sight, and Madame d'Elfort has given us leave to see it. Will you not come to the gate?"

As she uttered this question, without waiting for a reply, she darted from the room, and Emily just saw her raven hair floating in the morning breeze, as, with the swiftness of a fawn, she bounded across the lawn to join her companions.

Emily turned toward the garden-window, to give Caroline her bonnet, which she had taken from the table; but Caroline was gone, and, supposing that she had left the house with Agnes, she proceeded to the outer gate, revolving in her mind the strange scene she was about to witness.

"Who is the person they are going to inter?" inquired she of Anna Lushington, who, with her characteristic indolence, was leaning against the gate in a languid posture.

"I have forgotten her name," was the answer, "but she belonged to the *congrégation*. She had lately inherited a considerable fortune, which she expended in the most charitable manner. Every one is loud in the praise of her piety and benevolence; they seem to regard her almost as a saint, and the *congrégationists* are to attend her funeral, in their distinguishing costume."

Emily recollected the account she had lately heard, of the society called the *congrégation*. It was composed of some hundreds of young ladies, who consecrated themselves, solemnly and publicly, to God and the Virgin. The dedication did not include any vow of celibacy or retirement, but the persons so dedicated professed to employ themselves chiefly in works of charity and devotion, and always accompanied the religious processions.

The deep sound of funeral chanting now arrested the attention of Emily, and, looking forward, she perceived a *cortège*, which was strikingly calculated to produce a powerful effect on the senses. It was preceded by several orphan girls, belonging to an institution which the deceased patronized: one of them carried a gilt cross, and the others wax tapers of an immense size. Then followed two or three hundred ladies, dressed in black, their faces shrouded in long white muslin veils, which floated gracefully over their mourning drapery. They also carried lighted tapers. The coffin was covered with black velvet, over which was thrown a white silk pall; another large cross was borne before it. It was surrounded by a great number of priests, in white surplices, with tapers in their hands. A multitude of persons in black closed the procession.

There was an air of grandeur and majesty in the whole of this ceremony, which was well calculated to strike the mind with awe, and operate powerfully on the feelings; and Emily felt its thrilling effect in no inconsiderable degree. When the glare of the tapers met her eyes, contrasted as it was with the mourning dresses

and flowing veils of the attending ladies. when the deep silence of the scene was, at intervals, suddenly interrupted by the sonorous voices of the priests, chanting, in a slow and sepulchral tone, the *requiem* for the departed soul;—she felt the whole fall on her heart with such a feeling of painful and overpowering emotion, that she could not, without fainting, have borne it much longer. She leaned, half-insensible, against the wall; a deep-drawn sigh, accompanied with tears, in some measure relieved the oppression of her bosom, when the procession was past; but as she walked back to her room, leaning on the arm of Louisa Selwyn, who was herself much affected, she could not but tremble for the effect of these delusive exhibitions, on the minds of those who were most dear to her in the place.

On re-entering the house, she was forcibly struck by Caroline's altered countenance. She, too, was pale with emotion, and had evidently been weeping. Emily drew near, and affectionately took her hand; but she averted her face, and, with a sudden movement, disengaging herself, hastily walked into the garden, with an evident determination not to be followed. Emily stood riveted to the spot with surprise, and gazed after her till she disappeared, then sought her own room, to reflect on the change which a few hours seemed to have produced on her once gay and open-hearted cousin. In crossing the corridor, she met little Agnes Beverley, who followed her into the room. Her dark eyes sparkled with animation, as she said,

“O Miss Mortimer! was not the funeral beautiful? I think I never saw anything so solemn; and then it was so affecting!”

“It was pompous,” said Emily, pensively, “but I think the beautiful simplicity of a Protestant funeral infinitely better calculated to impress the heart with suitable feelings. There is no warrant in Scripture for so much display, and the effect it produces on the mind is, perhaps, not the best calculated to encourage serious reflection.”

“Oh! indeed I think it is. *One cannot but be serious*, when one sees such solemn things, and I am sure I approve very much of *that Roman Catholic custom*.”

These words were uttered with a tone of much self-sufficiency and conceit. Emily made no reply, for her heart was too full to allow her. The impression produced by Caroline's behavior dwelt painfully on her mind, and her tears flowed unrestrainedly, when Agnes had left the room. When the two cousins again met, Caroline seemed to have recovered her composure; but there was a chilling reserve in her manner, which effectually prevented Emily from inquiring into the cause of an alteration so wounding to the feelings of a friend.

From that day, Emily seemed to have lost all access to the heart of her cousin. That sweet union of soul which they had hitherto

enjoyed, that delightful oneness of sentiments, feelings, and pursuits, which had till then subsisted between them, seemed now completely at an end, and gave place to the most painful reserve. The smile of unaffected cheerfulness no longer brightened the face of Caroline; her natural sprightliness had disappeared; she seemed thoughtful and unhappy, avoided all conversation with her cousin, and frequently shunned her approach with the most sedulous care.

Many were the tears which Emily shed over this painful estrangement; many were the prayers she offered up, for the return of her cousin's confidence. She had recourse to every method that the most sisterly affection, and tender anxiety, could suggest, to win back the heart she so much prized; but, alas! they were all ineffectual. Caroline continued gloomy, cold, and silent; she seemed to indulge in some secret anguish, and to be violently agitated by some powerful conflict. Emily struggled to conceal her distressed feelings, and strove to gain, by gentleness and forbearance, a disclosure which she longed, yet dreaded to obtain. Disappointed in this hope, she could no longer conceal her anxiety, but resolved openly to request some explanation from Caroline.

She did not, however, meet with the opportunity she sought, but was, some time after, delighted to see Caroline's cheerfulness gradually return. The gloom insensibly vanished from her brow, and her manners resumed their accustomed ease; yet a shade of restraint would occasionally damp her vivacity, and there was a marked reserve in her conduct, whenever religion was the subject of conversation, which painfully oppressed the heart of Emily. She trusted, however, that time might do much to dispel these occasional clouds; and, as she saw no diminution in her attention to the duties of religion, she at least endeavored to persuade herself that there was no real cause for anxiety.

But her attention was soon powerfully arrested, by the sad effects of French society on the minds of some of her young companions. She saw, with much pain, that Emma Selwyn gradually lost all relish for spiritual things—all pleasure in serious employment. The baneful influence of gay and thoughtless company, drew away her naturally yielding mind from that attention to religious subjects, which it had been the most anxious wish of her parents to inculcate. She betrayed a restlessness and languor, when engaged in the duties of the Sabbath, which could not fail to strike those who had witnessed the delight she took in them, on her first arrival in France. Alas! her religion now seemed to have been but as the seed cast into stony ground, which, not having sufficient depth, sprang up with fair and joyful promise, but withered away beneath the rays of the sun of temptation. This idea was painfully impressed on the minds of Emily and her sister. They saw her enter with avidity into all the giddy pursuits

of her frivolous companions, mix with delight in the song and the dance, and shun the company and conversation of those whose anxious affection would fain have recalled her from the path of danger and destruction. They prayed and wept over her case, and earnestly endeavored to take advantage of every feeling of compunction, every sign of returning reflection; but their efforts were generally followed by disappointment; and the thoughtless Emma became every day more insensible to the admonitions of her friends, the precepts of her Bible, and the voice of her Heavenly Shepherd.

Lydia Howard had too much reflection and principle, to be seduced by the frivolous amusements which surrounded her on every side. She felt their emptiness and insufficiency, and joined in them as little as she could, though she had not sufficient resolution to decline them altogether. Her natural gaiety of disposition often betrayed her better judgment, and then her enlightened conscience severely reproved her, for yielding to the force of example. At such times she was truly miserable, and passionately longed for a return to her native country, as the only means of deliverance from the snares with which she saw herself beset. She detested French society, and sought with eagerness that of her more serious English friends; she took the greatest delight in religious exercises, and engaged with ardor in every religious pursuit. Yet she had not sufficient courage to avow her sentiments, nor strength of mind to resist the sinful practices she abhorred.

She was often prevailed upon, by what she called the *absolute necessity of circumstances*, to do many things which her conscience condemned, and which she could not afterwards reflect upon without great mental anguish. In this state of mind she could not be happy; but she endeavored to check reflection, and generally avoided everything like close conversation on religious subjects. Emily perceived the conflict of her mind, and felt the most tender compassion for the interesting girl. She pointed out the only means of overcoming these difficulties, and urged her to an entire surrender of heart to the Saviour, and a conscientious taking up of his cross, as the only way in which she could ever obtain peace; but poor Lydia despondingly pleaded her inability to overcome temptation; and, as she, in a great measure, neglected the source from whence alone she might have derived strength equal to her need, she naturally remained in this dark and comfortless state, the unavoidable consequence of resisting her better convictions.

Little Agnes Beverley was, if possible, still more in danger from surrounding allurements. She was not only involved in all the giddy pursuits of her companions: she not only renounced all the Christian maxims her parents had endeavored to inculcate, but she also seemed alarmingly prepossessed in favor of Roman

Catholic doctrines. It was often distressing to hear her repeat the arguments she had overheard, in order to prove those disputed points which had particularly come under her notice; these she maintained with a pertinacity which would hardly yield to the authority of Scripture evidence; and, though the fear of being ridiculed by the English generally induced her, at last, to give up the contest, Emily saw, with great uneasiness, that these pernicious errors gained daily ground in her mind, and superseded those scriptural principles, which she felt to be irksome on account of their strictness.

Poor Emily's mind was exceedingly distressed, and indeed almost overwhelmed with grief, as she thought on these discouraging prospects. The weight of anxiety that oppressed her would have been too much for her naturally desponding spirit, had she not found support from the promises of the gospel, and some degree of cheering encouragement from Louisa Selwyn and Miss Douglas. The former had too much good sense and religion, to be allured, either by the seductive influence of Popish errors, or the false charms of youthful dissipation; and the latter, notwithstanding her natural reserve, gave the most promising indications of a mind gradually expanding to the light of divine truth, and a heart unconsciously yielding to the sweet influence of Christian feeling. She was a sincere and candid inquirer, and willing, through grace, to embrace those principles which a diligent study of her Bible pointed out. Louisa had, from the first, taken a decided part against the sinful practices, and worldly spirit, that prevailed in the school; she was always distrustful of herself; and, as she rested for safety on an Almighty arm, she was mercifully preserved from the assaults of temptation. But it is not sufficient that a Christian should refrain from actual transgressions, and avoid the society and amusements of the world; he must cultivate an habitual fervor of spirit, a constant spirituality of mind, an intimate communion with his God, if he would enjoy the light of his countenance, or make any advances in the divine life. Incessant watchfulness is necessary, and continual supplies of wisdom, grace, and strength, must be sought for by earnest prayer, if we desire to walk humbly with God in any situation, but more especially in those where every surrounding object is calculated to ensnare the imagination, and draw the heart aside from the service of God. This was a lesson which the youthful Louisa had not yet sufficiently learned. She was truly devoted to God, and earnestly desirous of serving him; but she was not careful to maintain a watchful and praying spirit; and the natural consequences of the neglect was, the gradual decline of religion in her soul. A distressing coldness and languor insensibly crept into her duties; she no longer enjoyed the same delight in spiritual things, nor the same freedom of access to the

throne of grace. She was alarmed and discouraged by these difficulties, and communicated her fears and trials to Emily.

The latter was too well acquainted with the proneness of her own heart to depart from God, and had too often been tried by the same painful indisposition of mind, not to understand, and sincerely pity, the case of her young friend. She pointed out the only remedy for the diseases of the soul; the blood of Jesus Christ. She encouraged her to a renewed application, and a cleaving of heart to that gracious Saviour, assuring her, from her own experience, as well as from the declarations of Scripture, that his grace was all-sufficient in restoring the soul, and preserving it from the power of indwelling corruption.

Louisa followed her friend's counsel, and returned to the Rock of her salvation; she experienced the blessedness of waiting upon God, and rejoiced in the assurance of his unchanging faithfulness. But her situation and employments allowed her little time for reading or retirement; she looked too much to herself, and too little to her Saviour; she allowed her vigilance to relax, and the world to gain ground; she grieved her Almighty Friend, and he withdrew the light of his countenance. Deprived of all spiritual comfort, she had recourse again and again to his forgiving mercy; but, though she found that mercy a never-failing refuge, she was frequently allowed to feel the consequences of her unwatchfulness, by being left to walk some time in despondency and darkness.

The summer was now entirely past, and autumn had begun to strip the trees of their verdant foliage. The monotony of school occupations was seldom relieved by any pleasurable occurrence; but Emily's anxious observations on her companions furnished an ample field for the exercise of every varied feeling. She watched, with affectionate solicitude, the conduct of each, and the most trivial occurrences were often fraught with the deepest interest to her, as they displayed those different workings of the mind, which are frequently more expressive than either words or actions

CHAPTER VII.

THE PIOUS ROMAN CATHOLIC.

Who 's among you that seeketh the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.—ISAIAH L. 10.

It was a dark and stormy afternoon; the wind howled through the half-leafless trees of the garden, and the rain occasionally pelted against the windows; all nature seemed to wear the livery of sadness, as if dreading the approach of winter's iron reign; when Emily observed a group of young ladies, assembled with an air of solicitude round some object at the upper end of the school-room. She approached the spot to inquire the cause of their apparent anxiety, and beheld Rose de Liancourt, in an attitude peculiarly expressive of suffering. Her head was reclining on Louise's shoulder; her left hand was strongly pressed against her side, and the other concealed her eyes; she was perfectly silent, but the ashy paleness of her cheek, and the convulsive motion that occasionally agitated her features, gave the most painful indications of suppressed agony. Emily stood, for a moment, motionless with alarm, then, approaching her friend, she tenderly inquired if the pain was in her side, and if something could not be done to relieve it. Rose half raised her eyes, and faintly articulated, "Oh! lead me to my room, and let no one but you accompany me!" Madame d'Elfort that moment entered the apartment, and by her directions, Mademoiselle Laval, who had been kindly bending over the suffering girl, supported her to her room, with Emily's assistance. The pain in her side gradually yielded to the influence of proper remedies, and at length was so far diminished as to admit of her lying down with composure. Emily brought her work from the school-room, and sat by her bed-side for the rest of the evening. Rose was now sufficiently recovered to enter into conversation; and, alluding to the moment when she was brought from the school-room, she owned that the anguish which had then overpowered her, did not so much arise from the pain she endured, as from the fear of immediate dissolution.

"I have always thought that I should die very suddenly," observed she, "and the impression was then so strong on my mind, that I almost wonder I did not expire with terror."

"Are you much afraid of death?" inquired Emily, in a voice of anxious interest.

"Oh! yes, yes! but why do you ask that question? Is not death a most appalling thing? and does not nature shrink with horror from the very thought of its approach?"

"It is, indeed, dear Rose, an event of the most solemn importance;—but what is it which makes you regard it with so much dread? Do you consider it in the light of a painful separation from those you love, or do its attendant circumstances appear so chilling and dreadful?"

"Neither, my dear Miss Mortimer. I know that the heart must bleed, when the ties of nature are riven asunder; but it is the consequences of death, which appal me, when I reflect upon them."

"It is certainly an awful and decisive moment!" said Emily, with a deep, involuntary sigh. A short silence succeeded. At length Emily resumed,—“But why should the consequences of death seem dreadful to the Christian?”

"Why?" repeated Rose with astonishment. "Oh! can you ask me why? Is there not a fearful doom awaiting the unprepared soul, at that tribunal before which we must inevitably appear?" Her countenance became paler, as she uttered these words, and a slight shuddering seemed to agitate her frame.

"Blessed be God!" exclaimed Emily, clasping her hands in grateful emotion, "that there is also an Almighty, all-sufficient, and all-merciful Saviour, to shield us from that justly merited doom, and receive us into that everlasting rest, which His blood and righteousness have purchased for guilty sinners!"

The bright glow of Christian hope and confidence illumined the usually pale countenance of Emily, as her mind dwelt on that glorious state of felicity, which awaits the redeemed in the presence of their Saviour; but no answering expression of delight or comfort appeared in the looks of Rose. Her religion taught her that the soul must be purified, *after death*, from the sins and imperfections it retained; and that this was to be effected by a process of purgatorial suffering. Her conscience was so far enlightened, as to see something of the hateful nature of sin, and to feel that her sins were such, as to require not only an infinite atonement, but the utmost cleansing of the heart. She had but a very partial and clouded view of the gospel plan of salvation, of that "blood which cleanseth from *all sin*," and that grace which sanctifies the most polluted heart—it is not, therefore, surprising, that her awakened soul should shudder at the thought of appearing, before that holy God, who, she knew, "was of purer eyes than to behold iniquity."

Emily looked with pity on her dejected countenance, and attempted to lead her mind to brighter views. "My dear Rose, if we seek the Lord, He will not desert us in the hour of trial; and if we are his by adoption, we shall not be cast off at the end of our journey. 'There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus,' and the Saviour himself has said, 'He that believeth in me hath everlasting life.'"

"True, Miss Mortimer; but who can tell me if I belong to that blessed number? That awfully important question can only be answered at my death;—and oh! the uncertainty of that point! This it is which torments me, which makes me shrink from dissolution, and which, I feel, will make me miserable, to the last moment of my existence! Oh! how shall I enter the dark valley of death? How shall I plunge into a fearful eternity, with such a load of guilt on my soul, and with this distracting *uncertainty* resting on my future fate?"

Her feelings seemed wrought up almost to agony, and those of Emily were scarcely less agitated. There was something so appalling in the picture she had drawn, that the soul shuddered at the view. Emily could scarcely conceive anything more awful, than uncertainty in a dying hour. She, however, attempted to shake off the painful impression, and sought for some way of comforting her friend, without entering into a discussion of those sentiments which she was bound not to interfere with.

"Do you then think, Rose, that the momentous question you have mentioned can only be resolved after death? Is there no possibility of ascertaining our *personal* interest in the salvation of Christ, on this side the grave?"

Rose half-raised her eyes, with a mournful expression. "Perhaps," said she, hesitatingly, "*some* eminent saints *might* be so far favored; but then they must be *perfectly free* from *all* sin, before they can have that assurance; and oh! I feel that *that* will never be *my* case in this world!"

Emily's indignation burst forth, at this development of Popish doctrine. "Thank God!" exclaimed she, "that such religion is not mine! And oh! would to God, my dearest Rose!"..... she stopped, terrified at the indiscretion of her words, and instinctively looked round the apartment. Recovering from her confusion, she perceived that Rose looked hurt and offended. Anxious to repair, if possible, the mischief her hasty expressions had caused, she said, "Excuse me, my dear friend; I did not intend to wound you, or make any improper reflections; but my feelings often hurry me beyond the limits of prudence."

Rose was satisfied with the apology; but, as the gloom of despondency still sat on her countenance, Emily could not forbear making one more observation.

"Allow me, my love, to say, that the Protestant religion, which deduces its doctrines simply from the pure word of God, presents to the view of the Christian an infinitely brighter prospect. It tells us, from the Bible, that 'the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then *heirs*; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.' St. Paul says, '*We know* that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal

in the heavens! This, dear Rose, is not the language of doubt or uncertainty, but of triumphant *assurance*; and many, many are the delightful instances that have been witnessed, of Christians leaving the world, not only with a firm and well-grounded confidence, but the most blissful anticipations of a glorious immortality."

Rose shook her head, with an expression of mournful incredulity; then, feeling that they had both been trespassing on a subject, she requested that it might be dropped; and they both sank into thoughtful and constrained silence.

Most deeply did Emily feel for this sweet girl, who was thus kept in bondage and terror, by the gloomy dogmas of an anti-christian church. How ardently did she wish that she could open her Bible, and show her the unscriptural nature of those comfortless doctrines; but such a step was impossible, and with a sigh she changed the conversation. Friendship was the next subject introduced, and Rose spoke of a departed sister, whose virtues, sisterly affection, and piety, she dwelt upon with all the warmth of tender and mournful recollection. Emily had heard from others the most admirable character of this young lady, who had died about two years before: her piety, in particular, was the subject of the highest encomiums, and she was often proposed as a model to the young persons who had witnessed her short, but bright and exemplary career. She, therefore, listened with peculiar pleasure to the affectionate tribute of a sister's fond regrets; but there was, in the countenance of Rose, an expression of something more than even the most impassioned sorrow, whenever she spoke of this beloved sister. Her cheek assumed an ashy paleness; her lips quivered with suppressed emotion; and the almost convulsive agitation of her features, painfully indicated intense mental suffering.

She had been dwelling on the excellences of Maria's character, and her tears flowed in such unrestrained abundance, that Emily had in vain attempted every method of administering consolation. "My dearest Rose," said she, affectionately, "let me entreat you to remember, that excessive sorrow is sinful. If the friends we lament were pious, as I am persuaded your sister was;—if they belonged to the family of God, we ought not to 'sorrow as those without hope;' for the objects of our affection are safe and happy; and if we follow the same blessed course, we shall soon be reunited to them in the regions of eternal bliss."

"Oh! but," exclaimed Rose, in a half-stifled voice, "if those beloved friends should have died with any unconfessed sin on their conscience!—if they should not have been sufficiently holy to enter heaven!—if they should still be in purgatory!" The idea seemed almost too agonizing for her mind to endure:—she clasped her hands tightly on her bosom, as if to repress the violent palpitations of her heart. "Oh! my poor Maria! how

constantly and fervently do I pray for her!"—then, burying her face in her handkerchief, she sobbed aloud with convulsive anguish.

Emily hung over her unhappy friend, and wept in sympathy and grief. Her heart burned to unmask these detestable superstitions; but she durst not give her feelings utterance, and could only lift up her thoughts in silent prayer. Rose was now becoming more composed, but a step was heard in the adjoining room; the mourner hastily dried her tears, and, on the entrance of Madame d'Elfort, Emily retired to her own apartment.

Here she sank on her knees, and, after having fervently prayed that the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, might be granted to her friend, to dispel the darkness from her mind, and introduce her into the glorious freedom of the gospel, she sat down near the window that overlooked the garden, to reflect on the incidents of that evening. Emily had become somewhat inclined to melancholy. A deep sense of her own sinfulness, and perhaps the habit of dwelling too much upon it, frequently obscured the glories of redemption from her view, and united with a recently-contracted lowliness of spirits, to produce the most distressing doubts in her mind. It was but seldom indeed that she could "rejoice in the Lord," and her confidence was, at all times, rather a trembling hope, than a settled and joyful assurance. She looked too much to her own sins and short-comings, and too little, perhaps, to her all-sufficient Saviour; and the dejection attendant on these imperfect views, would not always allow her to receive comfort from the "great and precious promises" of the gospel. She had, that evening, been urging those promises on the attention of another, and dwelling on that blessed "full assurance of faith," which is the privilege of every Christian. She felt, however, that she herself could not then realize them;—that she herself did not enjoy that assurance;—and the enemy of souls was busily employed, in taking advantage of the moment, by suggesting that "she had neither part nor lot in the matter." The hour, also, and the scene that presented itself to her view from the window, had a considerable tendency to sadden her feelings. Emily was an enthusiastic admirer of nature, and her mind very frequently took the tone of the scenery and prospects around her. This disposition is often found in persons of ardent imaginations, and whose characters are slightly tinged with enthusiasm and romance; and, though it may be exceedingly prejudicial in its effects, yet there is a nameless charm attending it, which gives it an almost incredible power over the affections.

In the present instance, indeed, there was something in the evening, which wonderfully suited the melancholy of Emily's feelings. The storm was almost hushed, but the state of the atmosphere seemed to presage its speedy return. Twilight had

spread her dusky robe on every surrounding object, and night was fast approaching to close the scene. The gentle moon had risen in the firmament, but was obstructed in her progress by a thick, heavy mist, which completely veiled the beauties of the sky, and through which she was at times seen, struggling for freedom; now emerging from it in pale, watery brightness, then disappearing again from the view, behind its cavernous shroud. A rising gale was heard, sometimes shaking with fitful gusts the almost leafless trees, then moaning with a hollow sound along the deserted walks of the garden. A few heavy rain-drops occasionally fell in the mournful blast; and all nature seemed enveloped in a shroud of gloom and sadness.

Emily rested her head against the open window, and for some time resigned her mind to its own painful reflections. The scene that lay before her seemed, in a very striking manner, to picture forth the state of her friend's soul. The rays of divine truth did, indeed, in some measure, illumine the darkness there; but not enough to produce comfort, or dispel the gloomy mists of error and superstition. The deep and sad moaning of the gale, seemed a fit emblem of her desponding feelings. "And alas!" thought Emily, "there seems no way open, at present, by which the heavenly light may pierce those almost impenetrable clouds!"

From the subject of Rose's distress, her mind recurred to her own case. Faith and unbelief were struggling for pre-eminence; but the sweet light of hope seemed gradually dawning on her soul. She felt that if "her heart was not right before God," she at least desired earnestly to have it probed; and while the prayer of David burst from her lips, "Search me, O God! and try my heart; prove me, and examine my ways; and see if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting," she felt the tears of softened feeling silently moisten her cheek, and a sweet, filial confidence, succeeded to the cheerless despondency of her soul. "My Father!" she exclaimed, "thou art the guide of my youth!" These words, uttered with a sentiment of renewed trust, were like balm to her wounded spirit; she still wept, but her tears were those of tender and almost joyful emotion; and the moon at that moment, bursting in triumphant splendor from the vanishing mists, seemed to confirm the delightful assurance, that "the shadows would soon flee away" from every mind which was seeking for the light of divine truth.

Emily had remained a long time, absorbed in these various feelings, when a soft step entered the room. It was Louisa Selwyn;—she perceived that her friend had been in tears, and anxiously inquired the cause. "It was not grief, dear Louisa, but tenderness, and even pleasure. I was thinking of the mercy of God, and my spirits were overcome. I have passed some very painful, but very sweet moments, this evening."

Louisa turned away with a sigh, and was thoughtful for a moment. "I came," said she at length, "to invite you into the garden. The night has now become tolerably calm, and I thought you might not feel disinclined for a walk. Lydia and Helen are there already; for you know we are favorites with Made-moiselle Laval; and we obtained permission for ten minutes, though not without some difficulty."

Emily readily assented, and they descended to the garden. Having met Lydia and Helen, they walked for some time in company, till they came to an open terrace, which gave them an enchanting view of the surrounding objects. The moon was sailing in triumphant loveliness through a sky of the deepest blue, yet greatly varied by numerous flying clouds, which occasionally veiled her face, but from which she always emerged with renewed strength and glory. "Just such is the Christian," said Emily, in reply to an observation from Lydia. "His mind is often clouded by doubts and fears, and enveloped in the darkness produced by remaining sin and corruption; but, through the reflected rays of his glorious Redeemer, he triumphs over all these difficulties. Like the moon, he is dark himself, but the 'Sun of Righteousness' is his glory, and his everlasting light."

Emily spoke with a tone of voice which expressed the elevation of her feelings; and she saw that the subject was not devoid of interest to those who stood near her.

Helen Douglas said nothing, but she gazed steadfastly on her friend's countenance, with evident affection and pleasure.

Louisa also remained silent, but her thoughts seemed to be of a painful nature; she pressed the arm of Emily close to her, gazed on the sky for a few moments, then fixed her eyes on the ground, and sighed deeply. Lydia, however, could not forbear giving utterance to her feelings. "O, Emily!" she exclaimed, "how happy you must be! But how is it that *I* cannot understand your sentiments? What is the reason that *I* cannot feel as you do?"

"My dear Lydia, to enjoy religion we must experience its power; we must be desirous of devoting ourselves to God, before we can look up to him with confidence and love."

"Well; I *do* wish to love and serve God, but I *cannot* do it there seems to be an insurmountable barrier between me and religion. I often think it will never be otherwise. Do you think it ever will?"

"I hope and pray that it may; but remember, my dear girl, there must be no *reserves*;—they who will follow Christ, must learn to 'deny themselves, and to take up his cross.'"

Lydia pressed her hand thoughtfully to her forehead, and the friends proceeded towards an elevated seat, at a little distance from the spot where they had previously been standing. It was situated on a gentle-rising mound, and shaded by a drooping ash

and a beautiful laburnum. As they ascended the sloping path, they were startled by the sight of a figure, reclining against the tree. They stopped almost instinctively, and Lydia exclaimed with surprise, "It is my sister!" Caroline started at the sound of voices, and hastily rising from her seat, attempted to conceal a book she had been reading. Emily gently chid her for being out so late without a bonnet, and then attempted to draw her into conversation; but her fluctuating color announced the most distressing confusion; and, slipping away from her friends, she took the earliest opportunity of hurrying into the house.

Emily's eyes followed her retreating steps, and a thousand confused and painful thoughts rushed across her mind. She, however, took no notice of Lydia's conjectures on the subject, but pensively led the way back to the *salon*, and left her companions there.

Before retiring to rest that evening, she determined to request some explanation from Caroline. "My dear girl," said she, affectionately pressing her hand, "I can no longer endure the painful reserve which has for some time subsisted between us. It is entirely on your side, for you know that I have sought, by every demonstration of attachment, to win back your estranged confidence. Yet, distressing as your coldness is to me, I think I could sooner bear it, if I did not see you unhappy. But I am sure you have some secret sorrow preying on your heart, which you wish to conceal from me. O Caroline! this is not as it used to be! Where are those happy days, when we walked in sweet communion; and when we seemed to have but one heart, one interest, and one common feeling?" She was too much overcome to say more; and dropping her head on Caroline's shoulder, she gave way to her emotion in a burst of tears.

Caroline was evidently much agitated; she strained her weeping cousin to her heart, and replied, in a hurried voice, "Dearest Emily, you quite misunderstand me. I am not unhappy, at least, I am not silent from want of affection. Do not be uneasy on my account. Perhaps the time may come, when I shall be able to tell you everything; meanwhile, let me entreat that you will not question me."

Emily felt completely checked, by this evident determination not to satisfy her anxious inquiries; and she could not forbear weeping at this change in the conduct of her cousin. She found that, instead of regaining her confidence, this last step had only increased the distance between them; for Caroline now shunned every opportunity, which might have led to a renewal of the conversation.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GREY SISTERS.

I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.—ROMANS I. 9.

LYDIA's cough had lately returned, and her sister's attention was soon absorbed, by fears which this symptom of her former indisposition excited. The affectionate heart of Caroline was deeply alive to everything which affected, in the slightest degree, the persons she loved; and the mysterious gloom which had lately hung on her brow, immediately gave place to the expression of tender anxiety. She seemed to have forgotten everything, but the safety and comfort of this beloved sister. Once more kind and engaging, she seemed to be herself again, while she strove, by every affectionate effort, to cheer the sometimes drooping spirits of Lydia, and promote that recovery of strength, which was so desirable for the interesting girl. Emily watched her varying feelings, as they were alternately affected by hope and fear,—rejoiced at the returning freedom with which she now conversed on every subject but *one*, and endeavored to anticipate the time, when every cloud should at length vanish away.

Proper medical treatment, under the divine blessing, at length subdued those alarming symptoms which had threatened serious consequences to the health of Lydia. Exercise in the open air was strongly recommended. She therefore, whenever the weather was fine, walked out, under the care of Madame d'Elfort, or one of the teachers, and generally accompanied either by her sister or cousin.

It was during one of those excursions, that Madame d'Elfort proposed paying a visit to the "*Sœurs de la Charité*," or Grey Sisters, as they are usually called. The young people had heard of these *Religieuses*, who had an establishment not far from Madame d'Elfort's house; and, as they had often seen them in the street, and their costume and character had excited great curiosity in their minds, they joyfully accepted the proposal, which promised to make them better acquainted with so interesting an order of nuns.

The Grey sisters belong to the order of St. Vincent de Paul, They devote themselves to the relief of the sick, the poor and the afflicted. Their business is to seek out misery in its most retired haunts, and to spend their days in administering to the wants of the unfortunate. Their vows are annually renewed, and there is a certain period allowed them, at the end of every year, for deliberation, before they again contract the usual engagement. It hap

pened to be at this time, that Madame d'Elfort, Emily, and Lydia went to pay them a visit.

They entered a small shop, plentifully furnished with drugs of all kinds ; for the sisters exercised the science of Pharmacy in the utmost perfection, and not only sold medicines for the benefit of the institution, but distributed them *gratis* to the poor. Emily and Lydia were immediately struck with the extreme neatness that reigned in every part of the establishment. "How nicely everything is arranged!" whispered Lydia to her cousin; "Oh, how it reminds me of dear, happy England!" Emily gave her a smile of assent, and followed Madame d'Elfort to the counter. Behind it stood a middle aged woman, of a placid and agreeable countenance, and distinguished by that peculiar dress which they had so often observed in the street. It consisted of a coarse black woollen garment, a white handkerchief and apron, and a large cap, of a singular form, the long ends of which were turned up, and then again allowed to fall over, in a manner certainly not very graceful, but to which novelty, and the interest excited by the wearer's character, seemed to impart something like a charm.

Madame d'Elfort approached the nun, and addressed her with familiar kindness. "My dear sister," said she, "I have brought you two of my pupils, who are exceedingly enchanted with your mode of life, and very desirous of becoming better acquainted with you. We should be glad to rest a little in your parlor, and if sister Lucie is not gone out, I shall have much pleasure in conversing with her."

The nun bowed in a graceful manner, and moved towards an inner door. As she passed by Emily she addressed her with a smile: "Mademoiselle has some knowledge, I presume, of our order, and its objects."

"A little," replied Emily, "and I very much approve the latter. It must, however, I think, frequently prove a great trial of fortitude, and require peculiar support from heaven."

"It does indeed," rejoined the nun, "but we bear it all with cheerfulness; for our motive is the love of God, and *that* sweetens every painful circumstance."

Emily's eyes filled with tears; this was a language peculiarly affecting to her heart; and it was the first sentiment of the kind she had yet heard from a French person.

"It is true," said she, with animation, "that we can never do enough for him who has done so much for us;" and she passed with Madame d'Elfort, into the little inner apartment.

Here a young woman was sitting near a window, and rose on their entrance. She seemed about twenty-two, and the visitors could not but admire the uncommon loveliness of her person. There was an air of sadness in her countenance, which immediately interested the feelings of Emily; and the graceful elegance

of her manners denoted her a person of no common education. She had evidently been weeping, though she instantly assumed a tone of cordiality and cheerfulness. Madame d'Elfort took her hand, with affectionate freedom, but started at sight of the tears which still glistened in her dark blue eyes.

"My dearest Lucie," exclaimed she, "what can be the matter? You have been in tears!"

"Oh! it was nothing of any consequence,—nothing really painful, at least," replied the interesting *religieuse*.

"Yet I have seldom seen you weep, sister Lucie, and your tears must have had some cause."

"I am, perhaps, very foolish, my dear Madame d'Elfort; but I will tell you what affected me, and you will see that there is no reason for your anxiety. Our annual vow expired last Monday, and these are the intermediate days, during which we are to decide upon the renewal of the engagement. I may indeed say, that they are the only miserable days in the year to me; and I never longed so much for anything, as I do for their termination. The bond which unites me to Jesus Christ and his church seems to be dissolved: I no longer appear to belong to him, and the very idea is fraught with inexpressible anguish. I have scarcely slept since the commencement of this dreary *interim*, and shall not enjoy one moment's peace or pleasure, 'till the re-uniting of the severed tie restores me to the blessed service I would not quit for a crown."

Sister Lucie wiped the starting tears from her eyes, as she ceased speaking, and Madame d'Elfort cast on her pupils a look of unutterable meaning. Emily gazed for a moment, with surprise and almost veneration, at the beautiful enthusiast before her; a crowd of confused and indefinable feelings succeeded each other rapidly in her mind; and she could only return the pressure of Lydia's hand, and cast her eyes on the ground, fearful of betraying the sensations which she felt ought not to be disclosed.

"My dear Lucie," observed Madame d'Elfort, seating herself beside the *religieuse*, "I am glad it is nothing more serious; but you really quite alarmed me. Remember, my love, that external vows can add nothing to the strength of that heavenly bond, by which you are united to the Lord; your heart and soul are devoted to his cause, and he will only esteem your services the more for their being voluntary, and reward your attachment to the church and himself with the greater liberality.—But come," continued she, presenting Emily and Lydia, "you must allow me to introduce two of my pupils, who are very great admirers of your virtues and devotedness."

The nun turned towards them, with an air of peculiar vivacity and frankness, and made several inquiries, which led to a general conversation. Her language was elegant, yet simple; her obser-

rations full of intelligence ; and there was an expression of sensibility in everything she said, which threw an indescribable charm over her interesting figure. Emily and Lydia could not help frequently glancing at her face, and felt irresistibly attracted by this singular being.

Madame d'Elfort conversed with her, on the different scenes of suffering and misery she daily witnessed ; and sister Lucie spoke of her labors among the poor, with an enthusiasm which soon made its way to the hearts of her youthful auditors. Emily asked herself, as she looked at her glowing countenance—"What is the *spring* from whence flows all this devotedness of heart and life ? Is it genuine piety, or dark-minded superstition ?—is it scriptural love to God and man, springing from a vital principle of grace in the soul,—or a slavish, self-righteous hope, of securing heaven by such works ?" There was too much reason to fear the latter, from the corrupt and anti-scriptural tenets of the church to which sister Lucie belonged ; yet there was something so apparently humble and self-denying in her life and character, and she spoke so sweetly of love to God, as softening and hallowing every painful duty, till it became a source of the purest delight, that Emily could not but indulge the pleasing hope, that she might be a sincere and devoted follower of the Lamb.

After half-an-hour's conversation, the visitors rose to depart. Sister Lucie took the hands of Emily and Lydia, and, pressing them in a manner which denoted the deepest feeling, said, with a half-sorrowful smile, "Let me hope that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you occasionally. I should be happy indeed, if I could be the means of guiding such sweet lambs to the fold of the good Shepherd." Emily returned the pressure in silence, and hurried away. There was a sort of fascination in everything the *religieuse* uttered ; she felt that her heart was too much moved,—that there was danger in remaining longer in her society, and was glad when the fresh air in some measure relieved the oppression of her feelings, and a return home enabled her to reflect with coolness on the scene she had just witnessed.

CHAPTER IX.

THE YOUTHFUL BACKSLIDER.

Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know, therefore, that it is an evil thing, and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God.—JER. II. 19.

EMILY did not trust herself to speak, during their walk, lest she should "speak unadvisedly." Lydia's heart was full, and often rose to her lips; but, fearful of doing wrong, by giving vent to her feelings, she thought it best to imitate her companion's silence, for she knew it was not without meaning; and, in doubtful circumstances, she often made it a point to regulate her conduct by her cousin's looks. Madame d'Elfort was also silent, apparently waiting for some observation from her pupils, and evidently surprised at their taciturnity. On re-entering her own house, however, she led the way into the garden, and inquired "how they liked what they had seen of the *bonnes sœurs*?"

"They seem to be a very interesting order," replied Emily, the tears of excited feeling unconsciously starting to her eyes; "and if their motives are as pure as their actions are praiseworthy, they must certainly be considered as truly exalted characters."

"How can their motives be otherwise than pure?" inquired Madame d'Elfort, with the accent of surprise. "Is it not for the love of God, that they thus devote themselves to a life of self-denial?—that they renounce all the advantages of fortune, birth, and education,—all the luxuries, and even comforts of life:—that they submit with cheerfulness to every kind of humiliation, every trial of fortitude, every occasion of disgust,—and stoop to every degrading office, to supply the wants of the destitute, and alleviate the woes of the miserable? Have we not just witnessed a most affecting proof of the ardor and purity of their charity, in the conduct of sister Lucie?"

"Their employment is indeed a noble one," said Emily, wishing to drop the conversation, for she knew not how to answer. She could have told Madame d'Elfort, that it was possible for a person to "bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and even give his body to be burned," and yet be destitute of that heaven-born charity, that living principle of divine love, without which the most splendid actions are but "as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." She could have told her that it was possible for self-love to poison the springs of benevolence; and that if the *bonnes sœurs* were thus "going about to establish their own righteousness," and seeking to work out for themselves a title to the heavenly inheritance, they would, in the great day of account, find their boasted virtues

to be indeed "but filthy rags," and having "compassed themselves about with sparks," would at length be condemned to "lie down in sorrow." All this she felt, and could have wished to say; but she remembered how awfully the church to which Madame d'Elfort belonged, had departed from the truth, on that very subject; she shrunk from the task of thus openly arraigning her governess's principles; and, yielding to a blameable, but too natural timidity, retired to her own room, to avoid further conversation.

Here she employed herself for some time, in moderating, by scripture arguments, the effect of the recent occurrence on the aching mind of Lydia. It was well for the latter, that she was ever anxious to bring every doubtful point to the touchstone of inspiration; and, convinced, by that unerring word, of the radical errors of the Romish church, she soon learned to distinguish between its doctrines, and the beautiful instances of individual piety, which it sometimes presents to the impartial observer. "Oh! Emily," said the warm-hearted girl, "what a pity it is, that so lovely a character as sister Lucie should belong to so corrupt and unscriptural a church! What would I not give, to see her a Protestant! But I hope she will be saved at last!—don't you, cousin Emily?"

"If she is a *Christian*, my dear Lydia, and places her whole dependence on the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, she *will* certainly be saved. But you know it is of very little moment, whether we are Protestants or Roman Catholics if we are not 'the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus.'"

This observation, which Emily uttered with a gentle, but mournful emphasis, seemed to turn the current of Lydia's feelings. A slight flush appeared on her cheek, and she turned towards the window, with a half-suppressed sigh. She took up a book, as if to read, then threw it hastily away, and began to adjust her disordered hair. Caroline at that moment entered the room, and, with a smiling countenance, held up to her cousin a beautiful landscape, which she had finished drawing. Emily had just begun to examine it, when she observed Louisa and Helen entering arm in arm, through another door. The drawing called forth several expressions of admiration; but Lydia, who had now recovered all her vivacity, soon attracted every one's attention, by relating the occurrences of their morning ramble. She described sister Lucie in all the glowing colors which her enthusiastic mind gave to every object that interested her; and her attentive auditors soon caught some portion of her feelings; but, starting on a sudden, she sprang towards her sister, exclaiming, "Caroline! are you ill?"

Every eye was immediately turned to the spot, and the utmost alarm was excited. The ashy paleness of death had spread itself over Caroline's countenance; her lips quivered, her eyes closed,

and she sank against the bed. Emily caught her in her arms and Lydia shrieked with terror, while Helen hastily threw open the window, and Louisa ran to fetch a glass of water. Caroline's senses, however, had not forsaken her, and she faintly raised her self; but when her friends sought, by anxious questions, to know the nature of her illness, the agitation that shook her frame was indiscrible. Her varying color rose and fell with every inquiry, her heart throbbed with alarming violence, and a sense of suffocation seemed raising to her throat. Emily proposed sending for Madame d'Elfort; but Caroline, with a convulsive effort, attempted to suppress her emotion, and entreated that she might be left alone, assuring her friends that she felt considerably better. She accordingly assumed a forced calmness of manner, and, laying down, as if to take some rest, the young people quitted the room, all but Emily, whose anxiety would not suffer her to leave her friend. She drew the curtains round the bed, and seated herself in a recess of the room. Here she ruminated on the strange effect that Lydia's narrative had produced on her sister; for her emotion was evidently not the result of indisposition. The piercing eye of affection saw something dark and painful in this occurrence, but could not find any clue to unravel the mystery. Indeed, there seemed to be nothing but mystery in Caroline's conduct, for the last few months; and while a feeling of undefined apprehension oppressed Emily, she could not avoid an involuntary recurrence to those days of unreserved confidence, when her friend's heart was at all times open to her. "Alas!" exclaimed she mentally, while the bitter tears of anguish burst from her eyes, "she would not *then* have entreated me to leave her! She would have freely imparted to me every feeling that distressed her. But now, her heart is estranged from me; she is unhappy, and I cannot comfort her! O heavenly Father! keep me from murmuring—but, if it be thy gracious will, remove this bitter trial!"

She had remained some time, absorbed in these painful ideas, when the bell rang for dinner, and Caroline started up. Emily approached her, and tenderly inquired how she felt. Her countenance bore striking marks of an inward conflict; she looked pale and exhausted, and scarcely answered her friend's question. Emily turned away, for she could not bear the sight; and as Caroline descended to the dining-room, she hurried into the garden, to conceal her gushing tears.

The afternoon passed sadly away, and another trial still awaited Emily. Louisa had been complained of, by one of her teachers, for her want of application to some of her studies. She had repeatedly neglected to learn several very long lessons of history and geography, and, on being threatened with punishment for her offence, had displayed a considerable degree of irritability and pas-

sion. She answered Emily's remonstrances, by affirming that she could not perform what was required of her; but Emily felt it her duty to admonish her seriously, on the impropriety of her conduct, and especially on her thus giving the reins to her passions. Louisa answered not, but turned away in sullen silence. This circumstance inflicted a fresh pang on the heart of Emily; but she had recourse to fervent prayer, and received strength equal to her need.

The evening set in dark, cold, and wet; all nature seemed in unison with her dejected feelings. Caroline complained of a headache, and retired early to bed. Mademoiselle Laval was indisposed, and requested Emily, in whose prudence she reposed the most entire confidence, to extinguish the lights on her side of the house. The bustle of the evening ceased, and the different rooms became the abodes of silence. Emily sat at her writing-desk, with her Bible open before her; she leaned her forehead on her hand, and remained a long time absorbed in her own reflections. A gloomy feeling of apprehension pressed heavily on her mind; an undefined presentiment of something dreadful seemed to hover around her. The thought of writing to her father, on the subject of Caroline's unaccountable depression, for a moment presented itself; but what could she say? She herself knew not what to augur from it, and might only excite a groundless uneasiness. Besides, how could she describe her cousin's change of conduct? It was rather to be *felt* than expressed, for it consisted chiefly in those delicate shades which none but the watchful eye of affection can observe. Yet something there certainly was, and that something, so unaccountable, was evidently of a painful nature. Emily's heart was sad and oppressed; her tears unconsciously dropped through her fingers, and wetted the leaves of the Bible. She dried them with her pocket-handkerchief, and while doing so, her eyes fell on those sweet words of St. Peter, "casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." She felt cheered by the assurance they afforded, of a gracious Saviour's compassionate sympathy, and encouraged to bring her burden to him, with something like filial confidence.

She was alternately lost in thought, and engaged in mental supplication, when the great bell of the cathedral announced the hour of eleven. She started from her seat, and, recollecting Mademoiselle Laval's charge, hastened to extinguish the lights. She found most of the young ladies asleep, and, therefore, performed her task in silence. On entering Rose de Liancourt's room, she was surprised to find her still on her knees. She had a book before her, and a rosary in her hand, and appeared deeply engaged in some prescribed form of devotion. Emily stood a moment irresolute, unwilling to disturb her, yet not daring to leave the light. But Rose slightly turned her head, and held the candle towards

her; Emily approached to take it, and observed that her face was bathed in tears. She with difficulty repressed her emotion at the sight, but could not refrain from silently kissing the hand that was extended to her. It was hastily withdrawn, and, after extinguishing the light, she left the room, mentally exclaiming, "Hear, O Lord! and accept her prayers, through the intercession of Jesus Christ!"

She passed from thence into Louisa's room, and found the light already extinguished. She was retiring to her own apartment, when the figure of some one, sitting in the window, somewhat startled her. She approached to see who it was, and found Louisa, completely dressed, and in an attitude of the deepest dejection. Her head was resting against the casement, and one hand concealed her eyes. She did not move when Emily approached, but seemed entirely unconscious of her presence.

"Louisa!" exclaimed Emily with astonishment, and shaking her gently, "Louisa! are you asleep?"

A slight motion of the head, and a half-uttered "No," convinced her that this was not the case.

"Why do you sit up so late, Louisa?" she inquired. "Do you know that it is past eleven, and that you are not only injuring your health, but, if it were known to Madame d'Elfort or the teachers, you would justly incur their serious displeasure?"

"I know it," replied Louisa, sullenly, and without removing her hand from her eyes.

"But what can be your object?" resumed Emily. "Your candle was out, and you therefore could neither read nor write. What pleasure or advantage, then, can you expect to derive, from sitting up in the dark?"

"I neither expect nor wish for any, but I dare not go to bed."

"Dare not!" repeated Emily, with increasing astonishment. "What do you mean, my dear Louisa? Pray explain your mysterious words!"

"I dare not go to bed, Miss Mortimer, because I have provoked God beyond all endurance; and as his vengeance will most certainly fall on me, I wish to await it with resignation, and in the full possession of my senses."

This was uttered in a low voice, and with an appearance of calmness, or rather stupefaction, which certainly made it doubtful whether she was, at that moment, in the full possession of those senses. Emily shuddered at the words, and still more at the manner in which they were pronounced. She scarcely knew how to answer them, but exclaimed, after a moment's pause,—

"O Louisa! Louisa! and you can speak thus calmly on so dreadful a subject! Is it, then, so light a thing to 'fall into the hands of the living God?' You say you have offended him, and provoked his vengeance; why then oh! why do you not fly to the refuge

of sinners? Is there not an atonement for guilt; a fountain for sin and for uncleanness?"

"Yes, there is, but not for me. I have sinned beyond the hope of pardon."

"My dear Louisa," said Emily affectionately, setting down her candle on the table, and taking the hand which was listlessly resting on the window-seat, "You must not give way to this gloomy idea,—indeed you must not! I have often observed the tendency of your mind to adopt the suggestions of despair, on every trying occasion. But these thoughts are the temptations of Satan, and if you indulge them, they will harden your heart in impenitence and unbelief. Look up, my dear girl, look to Jesus, whatever may have been your transgressions; however multiplied, however aggravated, they cannot place you beyond the reach of His mercy. There is hope in His cross for the most guilty,—salvation for the most vile and polluted of sinners. 'He is the propitiation for our sins,' and 'His blood cleanseth from all sin.'"

"But I have sinned against light, against knowledge, against conscience. I have professed love to God, while my heart was estranged from Him. I have resolved, and broken my resolutions; made vows against sin, and insulted the majesty of heaven by renouncing them. I am a hypocrite and a backslider, and there is no further hope for me; I may as well say with the rebellious Israelites, 'I have loved idols, and after them will I go,' as attempt once more to mock God by ineffectual applications for mercy; for if I could even obtain forgiveness, it would only be to increase my condemnation tenfold, by relapsing into sin."

Emily was deeply affected by these expressions, and still more by the settled gloom of despondency which rested on the unhappy girl's countenance. She entreated her to look to the Saviour for pardon, and to the Holy Spirit for grace, to preserve her from falling again; assuring her, with the most affectionate earnestness, that the Lord Jesus would not cast her out, and that she would find His strength all-sufficient against the assaults of temptation. But her words appeared to make no impression whatever; and the precious promises of scripture she brought forward, were only received with a sullen shake of the head. Louisa persisted in the most obstinate silence, and resisted every endeavor which her friend used, to comfort her, or persuade her to go to bed.

Emily felt much perplexed, as to what measures she should adopt; for she could not think of leaving her in this situation, and all attempts at persuasion were evidently hopeless. With streaming eyes and uplifted heart, she implored direction and assistance from above; and a thought suggested itself, which she resolved to put in execution. She assumed an air of severity and determined resolution, and peremptorily commanded Louisa to kneel down and pray for mercy. There was a superiority in Emily's man-

er, whenever she chose to enforce respect, which had often been felt and acknowledged, by those who had incurred her serious rebuke. She perceived that Louisa was awed by the commanding tone of her voice; there was a moment of hesitation; but the order was emphatically repeated, and Louisa fell mechanically on her knees. Emily knelt by her side; she could not pray for her aloud, lest she should disturb the inhabitants of the adjoining rooms; but her full heart found utterance in silent supplications for mercy on her afflicted friend.

In about ten minutes she arose, and the still silent Louisa arose with her. Her eyes remained fixed on the ground, and the gloom had not departed from her countenance. Emily saw that entreaty would be fruitless, and therefore sternly directed her immediately to undress and go to bed. The order was received in silence, and mechanically obeyed.

"Good night, dear Louisa," said Emily, pressing her hand, as she was about to leave her. The hand was passively yielded, but the pressure was not returned, nor the farewell replied to. Emily paused a moment, then with a deep sigh left the room. She found abundant matter for reflection and prayer, in the incidents which had occurred that evening; and it was not till near one in the morning, that she returned to her own bed. Before she did so, however, she again stole softly to Louisa's room, and felt somewhat relieved by observing that she had fallen into a heavy slumber.

Emily's first care in the morning, was to inquire anxiously after her cousin's health. Caroline assured her she was quite well, but her looks contradicted the assertion. She appeared dissatisfied, restless, and unhappy, and her reserve was, if possible, augmented. Emily bent her way to Louisa's apartment, where she found the gay and dissipated Emma, who had just returned from a visit of two or three days to a French family in the neighborhood. Louisa looked the picture of wretchedness; she complained of a dreadful headache, and seemed anxious to avoid all conversation. She expressed her determination not to get up, and Emily went to fetch her some milk for breakfast, which, however, she refused to take. The traces of tears and sleeplessness were visible in the mild countenance of Rose de Liancourt. Emily and she embraced each other at meeting, but no notice was taken of the last night's incident, except by an affectionate pressure of the hand, which, however, seemed to speak volumes.

CHAPTER X.

RESTORING MERCY.

Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.—JER. III. 22.

EMILY took the earliest opportunity which her different studies allowed her, of entering into serious conversation with Louisa. She found that she had, for some time, been living at a distance from God, struggling against the remonstrances of conscience, slighting the admonitions of the Spirit, and consequently giving way more and more to the dominion of sin, and involving her soul in the dreadful gloom of guilt and misery.

Every evil propensity of the natural mind was thus nourished into increasing strength, and every passion which had been heretofore subdued, broke out into fearful rebellion. The inevitable consequences were, alienation of heart from God, a guilty dread of approaching Him, sorrow and anguish of spirit, and a sullen determination to reject everything like hope. In this gloomy recklessness of unbelief, she "refused to return to her insulted Saviour, and was resolved to lie down in despair, with the fearful expectation of impending punishment.

It was in vain that Emily pleaded the all-suffering atonement, and the inexhaustible fullness of the Lord Jesus Christ; in vain that she pointed to his cross, appealed again and again to His promises, and implored her, with tears of passionate entreaty, only to cast herself on His mercy and faithfulness. Louisa remained gloomy, silent, and unmoved, and she at last left her in almost hopeless discouragement; to relieve her overburdened heart by laying her case at the feet of her compassionate Redeemer.

"There is no hope," Louisa had said, and the enemy of souls was busily engaged in fixing this persuasion in her mind. But it was not so much from the magnitude of her guilt, as from an erroneous estimation of the power of Divine Grace, that she drew the fatal conclusion. "I feel that I never shall be able to serve God aright," would she say, in answer to Emily's earnest representations. "I know that all you urge is true—that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,' and that 'though my sins be as scarlet,' He can make them 'white as snow.' But should He even extend towards me that mercy which was extended to Manassah and Saul, of what use would it be, but to increase my condemnation? I should only be pardoned to offend again,—only restored to relapse, with aggravated guilt and misery."

"But, my dear Louisa, you have hitherto trusted in your own strength, and that is the reason that you have found it worse

than weakness :—“In the Lord Jehovah alone is everlasting strength; and it is by his power alone that we are kept ‘through faith unto salvation.’ Remember that gracious promise, addressed to all those who, renouncing all dependence on their own strength, look to Him alone for support in every hour of need; ‘Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.’”

“But, Miss Mortimer, I have never been under the influence of divine grace; I have never been a Christian, or I could not be what I now am, or act as I do. I have been a hypocrite too long; I will be so no longer; I will not insult God, by a profession which I cannot maintain. You have been deceived in me, and I have hitherto deceived myself.”

“Well, supposing it is so, Louisa, your duty is equally plain and simple. ‘Look unto me,’ says the Saviour, ‘and be ye saved:’ ‘him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.’ Come to him, then, my beloved girl; come to him *now*, in humble faith. He will *in no wise* cast you out—in *no wise*, my Louisa! they are his own gracious words. Come to him and you will find him faithful to his promise. Oh! do not, by your obstinate unbelief, shut yourself out from his mercy and compassion!” Emily was quite overpowered, as she pronounced these words, and her full heart found some relief in a flood of tears.

Louisa did not answer, but she concealed her face with her hands. A step was now heard ascending the stairs, and Emily had scarcely time to dry her tears, when Madame d’Elfort entered the room. She anxiously inquired respecting Louisa’s indisposition, and appeared quite alarmed on looking at her. The mental anguish which had been for some time preying on her soul, and which was only the more visible from the assumption of unnatural apathy, had indeed, during the preceding night, made fearful ravages on her health. There was a wildness in her eye, and a convulsive agitation occasionally perceptible on her features, which strikingly contrasted with the death-like paleness of her countenance. Madame d’Elfort took her hand, and instinctively drew back at the frightful violence of her pulse. She gave her a composing cordial, commanded that the greatest stillness should prevail in the adjacent rooms, and requested Emily to visit her occasionally; expressing her intention of sending for the medical attendant in the evening, should no change for the better appear to have taken place.

Emily sat for a long time by the side of Louisa’s bed, and made several attempts at conversation, anxiously desirous to lead her back to the Saviour for peace and comfort; but she could not prevail upon her to speak. She read to her in a low voice, the most general invitations and promises of scripture, and patheti-

cally entreated her to embrace the sweet encouragement they offered. But it seemed all in vain; Louisa continued silent; and Emily, whose feelings were totally overcome by this distressing conduct, at last dropped the Bible on the bed, and hurried to the casement, to indulge her tears. The window commanded a view of the garden, and, in order to recover some degree of calmness, she stood a moment or two contemplating the scene before her. When she returned to the bedside, Louisa had apparently fallen into a quiet slumber. She gazed on her countenance in silence; but the expression of deep-seated anguish it presented was too painful for her agitated mind to endure; she staggered out of the room with a sensation of faintness, and was just able to reach the garden, in time for the fresh air to prevent her swooning.

The wind was howling dismally through the now leafless trees, and the air was damp and chilling; but she heeded not these things, and felt not their influence; for her thoughts were too deeply engaged on the subject of Louisa's situation. It was evident that a kind of sullen despair had taken possession of her mind; and that her health was rapidly sinking under its effects.

From this distressing reflection, Emily was led to revert to the causes which had gradually produced these painful effects on her young friend. It was true, indeed, that the immediate occasion of her misery was a gradual declension from God,—a departure from the way of spiritual religion, and an habitual neglect of watchfulness, and communion with her Saviour. But how many collateral circumstances had contributed to this declension! and how difficult was it, in her situation, to avoid the snares into which Louisa had fallen! Thrown into the midst of ungodly society, continually exposed to the dangers of error, or the fatal influence of irreligion, surrounded by the evils of superstition, connected with the most daring disregard of God's commandments, allowed but few opportunities of enjoying the public means of grace, having no experienced Christian friend to guide her steps through the mazes of temptation, harassed with incessant study, and occupations the most laborious to the mind, which she was compelled to pursue with an application amounting almost to slavery, and deprived of the smallest portion of leisure, which might have enabled her to cultivate, by religious exercises, those Christian graces she so much needed, and that habitual nearness to God, which alone could form the safeguard of her soul—thus situated, thus beset, could it be a subject of wonder that she had declined, and that the fearful clouds of despondency seemed now even to threaten her reason and her life?

Emily took a mental survey of her English companions in the school; and her heart sank in dismay, as she observed the pernicious influence which their situation had already exercised over every mind, and especially over those for whom she felt more im-

mediately concerned. Some had plunged into giddy dissipation, and disregarded everything that was serious or scriptural. One had not only adopted French manners, and French principles, but seemed in the greatest danger from the fascinations of popery. A third was vainly struggling to silence an enlightened conscience, and to persuade herself that she could be happy without vital religion. A fourth was evidently suffering from some unknown cause of mental anguish; and the mind of a fifth seemed ready to sink under a weight of hopeless despondency.

Emily felt oppressed by this melancholy review, and could not but deeply deplore that cruel ambition of worldly accomplishments, or that reckless indifference to their eternal interests, which so generally induced Protestant parents to expose their children to the baneful influence of French society, and a French education.

It was not till the dinner-bell summoned her back to the house, that Emily left the bower in which she had been revolving these painful subjects of contemplation. As soon as she could leave the dining-room, she returned to her own apartment, where she found a letter, which had just been brought for her. She opened it, with eager haste, and perceived with delight the signatures of Mr. and Mrs. Somerville. She could not read it without tears, for the advice it contained was peculiarly appropriate. Her friends exhorted her to "cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart,"—to be tremblingly on her guard against the spirit of the world, and, in short, against everything which tended, even in the slightest degree, to draw her affections away from heavenly things. Mrs. Somerville made several kind inquiries about Caroline, and expressed some surprise at not having heard from her; and Mr. Somerville, after dwelling at some length on the preciousness, the suitableness, and immutability of the divine promises, and applying them with peculiar force to his young friend's situation and circumstances, concluded in the following manner:—

"And now, my dear child, I have only room to add a very few words. Would you enjoy the richness, the unspeakable blessedness, of these promises? Keep up a close and familiar intercourse with your gracious, all-sufficient Redeemer. 'It hath pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell;' and it is your delightful privilege to make use of Him by faith, in all His covenant offices. Beware of a lukewarm and undecided state; beware of 'following Christ afar off;' for you will never enjoy solid peace, till you 'abide in Him,' by means of the most intimate communion. Farewell, my dear young friend: 'I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up,' and 'establish you in the faith.'"

"O! my father, my friend!" exclaimed Emily, as she folded up this kind and truly welcome letter. "How happy should I be, if I could, at this moment, unburden my anxious heart to you, and

entreat the benefit of your advice and your prayers ! But," added she, suddenly checking herself, "have I not a better friend and counsellor at hand,—even that heavenly Father, to whom you so kindly direct me ?" She covered her face with her hand, and breathed a silent prayer for the grace and assistance of the Holy Spirit. She was suddenly interrupted by Helen Douglas, who entered to inform her that the Italian lesson had been some time begun, and that the master had expressed some displeasure at her absence. She hastily followed Helen to the place, and was constantly engaged with a succession of masters till the evening.

As soon as her accustomed duties were over, she hastened to Louisa's room, and found her asleep. The ashy paleness of her cheek had given place to a deep flush ; her hand was pressed on her forehead, and there was an expression of suffering on her interesting countenance which powerfully affected the heart of Emily. A thousand tender and mournful thoughts rushed on her mind, mingled with a feeling of apprehension, which, however, was somewhat softened by a glimpse of hope and confidence. She sank on her knees by the bedside ; and, while her tears flowed silently and unrestrainedly, she poured out her full heart in mental supplication.

Louisa now heaved a sigh, and Emily, perceiving that she was awaking, started up from her knees. A faint smile welcomed her approach, and, to the anxious inquiry of her friend, Louisa only answered by holding up the Bible, which Emily now perceived had been clasped in her right hand. A thrill of doubtful joy darted across Emily's mind, like the glorious sunbeam of summer, when it suddenly bursts through a watery cloud ; but what was the rapture of her feelings, when Louisa said as she pressed her hand with affectionate energy, "O ! my dearest Miss Mortimer ! how can I thank you sufficiently for all your unwearied kindness ? I owe you a thousand thanks for pointing out to me those precious portions of scripture. Notwithstanding the hardness of my heart, notwithstanding my dreadful insensibility, I was led to read them over again, after I had induced you to leave the room, by feigning to fall asleep. I found my state and character most exactly described in them, and felt reproved for my folly, in persuading myself that 'there was no hope' for me. How was my hard and rebellious heart subdued, when I reflected on those gracious invitations, and those precious promises ! Look, my dear friend," she continued, pointing to a verse, while her tears flowed in abundance, "look at this soul-subduing remonstrance ; 'Wilt thou not, from this time, cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth ?' Oh ! yes : I trust my Saviour has made me willing again to embrace his salvation. But what completely demolished the separating wall of my sullen despair, was the blessed assurance contained in this verse, 'But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land

and a goodly heritage of the host of nations? And I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me.' I may then hope, that God will vouchsafe me the spirit of adoption; through the merits of my Redeemer, and that He will keep me in His fear and love. Oh! Miss Mortimer, this sweet hope is like life from the dead!"

Emily's joy was too great for utterance, but she mingled her tears of gratitude and transport with those of the penitent and restored Louisa; and the rest of the evening was spent in unrevered conversation, till the supper-bell summoned Emily away, and reminded her that she had not observed Madame d'Elfort's injunctions, to keep Louisa in the most perfect state of tranquillity. She was, however, evidently better, though the excitement of her feelings had certainly produced some degree of fever.

"The entrance of thy words giveth light," and they are indeed "spirit and life," thought Emily, as she kissed her Bible with transport, on returning through her own room to the *salon*. An insupportable weight of anxiety had fallen from her heart; and in the happy feeling of the moment, she forgot every other cause of uneasiness.

Caroline was gone to spend a few days in the country, with a French family, with which she had become acquainted; and Emily's attention was, therefore, principally engrossed by Louisa. On entering her room the next morning she found her in tears, and Lydia and Helen, who were sitting by her bedside, appeared little less affected. Emily expressed a hope that nothing painful had occurred, and Louisa replied, that they had been conversing on the mercy of God to sinners. "Oh! Miss Mortimer!" exclaimed she, with animation, "when I think of my ingratitude to my God and Saviour, and of his wonderful love and kindness to such a vile and rebellious creature as myself, I feel quite overwhelmed by the contemplation. Only think of that pathetic invitation, 'Return, ye backsliding children; and I will heal your backslidings;' and that blessed 19th verse,—'Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me.' Oh! it is too, too much!" and she wept with uncontrolled emotion.

The little party could not restrain their tears, but Emily, fearing the effect of too much excitement on the weak frame of Louisa, attempted to turn the conversation, by taking up a hymn-book, that lay upon the table. As she turned over the leaves, her eyes fell on a verse, which was so peculiarly appropriate, that she read it aloud to her young friends.

Nothing but thy blood, O Jesus!
Can relieve us of our smart,
Nothing else from sin release us;
Nothing else can melt the heart.
Law and terrors do but harden,
All the while they work alone;
But a sense of blood-bought pardon
Soon dissolves the heart of stone.

CHAPTER XI

SUNDAY EMPLOYMENTS.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.—EXODUS XX. 8.

A CALL to breakfast now separated the young friends, and each repaired to her appointed place, round the large table in the *salle à manger*. Emily's seat was near Madame d'Elfort's, and that lady often addressed her conversation to her. It was Sunday, and those of the boarders who had a regular weekly allowance of pocket-money, were generally called to receive it on that morning. This allowance was often forfeited to the use of the poor, as a punishment for certain acts of disobedience, idleness, or misbehavior. The baneful effects of this practice, in nullifying the sacredness of the Sabbath, were entirely overlooked; and it was frequently followed by another almost equally reprehensible. Those young ladies who, during the week, had been guilty of any gross violations of the rules of the establishment, were sentenced to be debarred the use of their Sunday clothes and ornaments, and to wear their every-day costume, both at church and during the afternoon walk.

It is not surprising that, with such a system, the children should think of little else than money and dress. Emily's heart sickened at the thought of the Sunday morning occupations, and she was, therefore, glad when the first cathedral bell put an end to the scene and the conversation, as every one then retired to her own room to dress. As she passed through several of these rooms, to reach her own, she heard scarcely anything but questions and answers about dress, accompanied by observations and criticisms on every new article that appeared in the wardrobe of every individual. Dress, indeed, was the principal object of attention, and more especially so among the French girls. They might generally be distinguished, any other day, by the comparative meanness of their attire, and an almost universal want of neatness in their appearance; but on the Sunday, they were invariably tight-laced, to a distressing extreme, and their gaudy finery strikingly contrasted with the elegant simplicity of their English companions. At the sound of the second bell, they all assembled in the front garden, where each girl busied herself in displaying her own dress, and making remarks on that of her school-fellows, till they were joined by Madame d'Elfort, and one of the teachers, who conducted them to the cathedral.

The departure was a subject of great delight to the English boarders, for, as soon as their own toilet was completed, they loved to retire into the garden, and enjoy a quiet chat among them

selves, unmolested by French observation, till the clock, striking ten, gave the signal for their departure. A long and somewhat fatiguing walk awaited them, ere they reached the English place of worship, which was a small chapel, in the outskirts of the town. A respectable English woman, in indigent circumstances, was paid by Madame d'Elfort to escort them, as Miss Parker, the English teacher, did not attend. The gospel was faithfully preached, by a young clergyman, and the more serious little party found this means of grace a source of delightful refreshment. It was the only public one they were allowed during the week, for Madame d'Elfort would not hear of their going more than once on the Sunday; and they were often deprived even of this solitary privilege; for the least unpleasantness in the weather, or the slightest indication of rain, was a sufficient reason for excluding them from its enjoyment. Many an ardent wish was, therefore, breathed by all, for fine weather on the Sunday morning; though the levity and inattention of too many plainly showed that it was not spiritual improvement they sought, in this visit to the house of God.

The chapel was so small as to be incapable of containing above one-fifth part of the English residents in S——. Yet it was never crowded, and only well attended on the Sunday morning; a melancholy proof of those irreligious habits, in which a great majority of them were living.

On returning home after divine service, the English pupils always dined by themselves, as the French returned from high mass about eleven, and, after an early dinner, were again taken to the cathedral, where they received catechetical instruction from the curé, or other priests of the town. The regularity of their attendance on every rite of the church was truly exemplary; and this was accounted for by Madame d'Elfort, who one day told Emily, that it was a *deadly* sin to be absent from mass, on any account but that of sickness—"I would, therefore," she added, "take my Catholic pupils to church, even if it were to *rain stones* from heaven." "Alas!" thought Emily, "how does this conscientious discharge of every religious duty, put to shame many of those inconsistent professors, who enjoy the advantages of a purer faith!"

A quiet walk in the garden succeeded the English dinner; and they were then allowed to retire for about an hour, in order to read the evening prayers together. They, however, frequently substituted the reading of a chapter, followed by a familiar conversation on the subjects it contained. This was often a trying time to Emily, for she was then obliged to take the lead, and, while she felt her own want of instruction, was always applied to for the solution of every difficulty. However, she did not allow herself to shrink from what was evidently a duty; she implored

help and direction from above, and was enabled to state clearly her own simple views of divine truth. Too many of her companions listened with a scornful smile, or turned away with contemptuous indifference, and manifested, by their restlessness, how little pleasure they found in this unwonted occupation; but Lydia, Helen, and Louisa, showed by their incessant questions how much the subject interested their hearts; and a few others maintained an attentive silence, and seemed to search the Scriptures with pleasure, though diffidence prevented their taking a more active part. Emily felt encouraged by these symptoms, to hope that the seed might not be sown in vain. The morning sermon was generally referred to, on these occasions, and the reading of a tract, or missionary paper, occasionally served to keep up the interest of the little meeting.

But, alas! the serious impressions, which this opportunity of spiritual improvement was so well calculated to cherish, were soon most furiously assaulted, and in too many instances destroyed, by the temptations which surrounded them, on again descending to the *salon*. Every allurement was thrown in their way; and their principles painfully put to the test. The fruit-woman was waiting, with her tempting supplies, and a quantity of milk, cream, and other refreshments, was pressed upon them. It required no small degree of resolution, in girls of their age, to withstand all these united snares; but, if they escaped unhurt through the trial, there were others at hand which it was impossible to fly from. The sacred tranquillity of the Sabbath was exchanged for noisy and unhallowed amusements; the frivolous song, the giddy dance, the thoughtless game, the ungodly conversation, assailed them in every quarter; and the youthful heart either turned with sickening horror from the scene, or yielded to the fatal influence of levity and indifference.

The hour of six was the signal for this profane mirth to cease; but, alas! it was not succeeded by a holier employment. The young ladies were then summoned to the school-room, and required to study their lessons for the ensuing week, till the hour of eight called them down to supper. Caroline and Emily, as *grandes pensionnaires*, were privileged to remain in their own room; and, at their parents' particular request, Lydia and the Misses Selwyn were exempted from the necessity of study, but compelled to sit in the school-room with the others. They, therefore, employed those two hours in reading, and were always anxious for a supply of tracts, or any serious books they could procure. Miss Kennedy's beautiful little works, "The Decision," "Father Clement," and "Profession is not Principle," were very great favorites with them all, and the first, especially, seemed to make no slight impression on their minds. As Miss Douglas's health had been delicate from her infancy, her parents had, in answer to her

earnest entreaties, requested of Madame d'Elfort that she might spend her evenings in Miss Morfimer's room, as the comfort of sitting near a fire was very desirable for her weak constitution. This was a privilege which she highly appreciated, especially on the Sunday evening; and the pleasure of the little party was sometimes increased by the presence of Louisa and Lydia; for, as Emily stood high in favor with the governess and one of the teachers, she occasionally obtained the indulgence of her young friends' society.

On these delightful evenings, the joy of their hearts was indescribable; and the hours flew rapidly away, amidst the charms of familiar conversation, in which the most blessed and important truths were sweetly blended with the cheerful anticipations of youthful hope, and the endearing expressions of mutual affection.

The natural vivacity of Caroline's disposition seemed once more to have triumphed over the unaccountable gloom which had for some time obscured it. On these occasions, she was frequently the life and soul of the little circle; yet Emily painfully felt that, though cheerful in company, she was pensive and reserved in private; and earnestly did she pray for grace, to wait patiently the arrival of happier days.

Thus passed the months of October and November, and the weather was now assuming a gloomier and drearier aspect. The cold was already intense, and the English girls felt it much more than the French; for, being accustomed to the warmth and comfort of well-finished houses, neat carpeted rooms, and cheerful English fire-sides, they could not but suffer much inconvenience from the almost total want of those accommodations. They shivered with cold in the midst of large, dreary rooms, the doors and windows of which admitted constant draughts of chilling air; there was generally a large wood-fire on the hearth, but it was impossible for many to sit near it; and while the cold almost froze the vital current in their veins, they looked round on the bare boards, and desolate appearance of their apartments; listened, with shuddering sensations, to the dismal howling of the wind, along the wide, echoing passages, and through the half-decayed casement; and breathed many a sigh of regret, for the absence of those domestic comforts, which make the *home* of an English girl so peculiarly attractive.

The conversation of the little party in Emily's room, it may easily be supposed, frequently turned on this subject; but, though it was one on which every one spoke with peculiar feeling, none was so eloquent in her effusions as the ardent and romantic Lydia. She poured forth the overflowings of her heart, in the most impassioned language, and described, in glowing colors, the superiority and happiness of her native country, till every ear hung on her words with ecstasy, and every heart kindled with some por-

tion of her enthusiasm. There was a similarity of disposition in many respects, and a sympathy of feeling, between her and Emily, which led to a striking conformity of tastes. They were both passionately fond of poetry; and while Lydia's sentiments and language were often highly poetical, Emily's secluded mode of life, and long-cherished habits of reflection, which often amounted to a kind of pleasing melancholy, had led her to court the muses from her childhood. It was after listening to one of Lydia's rhapsodies, in which she expatiated on the excellences of her beloved country, as the nurse of wisdom, bravery, and genius, the hallowed refuge of piety and virtue, and the sweet abode of every domestic blessing, that Emily retired to her desk, and expressed the feelings of her heart in the following stanzas:—

ENGLAND.

There is a land,—a happy land,—
Where peace and liberty are found;
A land which mercy's bounteous hand
Has with its richest blessings crowned:
A land of commerce, arts, and wealth,
Where comfort smoothes the peasant's lot—
Where sweet content, and smiling health,
Adorn his neat and rustic cot.

There is a land, where freedom reigns,
In all her native pride of soul,
And ranges through the verdant plains,
Unaw'd by tyranny's control.
Her smile repays the laborer's toil;—
Her song with ardor fires his breast;—
Her sweets enliven his native soil,
And make its blessings doubly blest.

There is a land, where glory's wreath
Is twined with mercy's olive-leaf;
Where valor braves the shaft of death,
Yet weeps to view the widow's grief.
A land that proudly, nobly stands,
In conscious majesty arrayed,
And proffers to surrounding lands
Protection, peace, and generous aid.

There is a land, where brightly glows
Fair charity's ethereal flame;
Where pity no distinction knows;
Of diff'rent clime, or faith, or name;
Where sweet compassion still defends
From cold and want th' unsheltered poor,
And warm benevolence extends
Her radiant wings from shore to shore.

There is a land, where gospel-light
Shines forth, with full, unclouded blaze;
Where superstition's dismal night
Has fled before its heavenly rays;
Where hoary age, and blooming youth,
Revere the Bible's sacred page,
Receive th' unerring words of truth,
And own its power from age to age.

There is a land, where Christian zeal
 With holiest ardor fires the mind,
 Where Christian hearts for heathen feet,
 And Christian labors bless mankind;
 A land whose missions prove the flood
 Of gospel-day, from pole to pole,
 And, pointing to a Saviour-God,
 Invite each sin-beghted soul.

Oh, yes! there is a land, so blest,
 So favored, so serenely fair,
 That peace has built her halcyon-nest,
 And virtue found a refuge there.
 There all the social comforts meet,
 And in the calm domestic bower,
 Grows every fragrant, heart-felt sweet,
 And piety's unfading flower.

Sweet England! dearest, happiest land!
 Fain would I strive thy charms to paint;
 But ev'n the poet's magic hand
 Must own its brightest touches faint.
 Land of the brave, the good, the free!
 In distant climes, where'er we roam,
 Remembrance "fondly turns to thee,"
 And owns thee still its better home.

O Home! thou sweet, endearing theme!
 Thou central point of earthly bliss!
 How bright, how beauteous dost thou seem,
 When viewed from such a land as this!
 To thee the heart instinctive turns,
 In sorrow's dark and trying hour;
 For thee the exile's bosom burns,
 And feels through life thy magic power.

England! let other regions boast
 Their brighter skies,—their golden fruit,—
 Thy hotter claims shall ne'er be lost,—
 Thy juster praise shall ne'er be mute.
 Dearer than Gallia's gayest smile,
 Or fair Italia's richest bloom,
 Thou art religion's favorite isle,
 And peace and virtue's quiet home.

What though thy summers languid seem?
 No fatal curse, no dire disease,
 Shoots from thy sun's benignant beam,
 Or mingles in thy healthful breeze.
 What though thy wintry months be drear
 'Tis then domestic circles meet;
 Affection's smiles their dullness cheer,
 And fire-side comforts make them sweet.

Then hail to thee, thou loveliest land!
 Thou beauteous isle! thou brightest gem
 That nature's "wonder-working hand"
 Has fixed in ocean's diadem!
 Green be thy smiling vales, and sweet
 Each murmuring rill, each hallowed grove;
 And may thy echoing hills repeat
 The sounds of harmony and love!

Beloved Albion ! may thy God,
 Whose watchful care thy comforts own,
 Still guard from ill thy hallowed sod,
 And still thy lot with blessings crown.
 Secure, unshaken, may'st thou stand,
 A rock, amidst the ocean's foam :—
 Still may'st thou be the gospel-land,—
 The land of peace,—the land of HOME !

It may easily be supposed that this little piece, though very imperfect, was received with the most enthusiastic delight by the English girls; but none more feelingly entered into its spirit than Lydia. She proudly exulted in the picture it drew of her native country; and the tears of emotion would rush to her eyes, while repeating some of its descriptive lines.

The most affectionate and endeared friendship subsisted between Helen, Louisa, and herself; but as Louisa was more decidedly serious than either of her friends, she knew less of their sentiments than would otherwise have been the case. Lydia and Helen, also, slept in the same room, and a similarity of tastes and inclinations insensibly drew them nearer to each other. Hence arose that intimate communion which seemed almost to blend their very souls into one. They communicated their every feeling to each other, and the sweet contagion of affection made those feelings common to both. But there was, perhaps, no subject on which the pliant mind of Helen so completely imbibed the sentiments of her companion, as that of religion. The volatile character of Lydia generally enabled her, on common occasions, to ward off the effect of her serious impressions. Yet there were moments when she could not silence those convictions;—when the voice of conscience would be heard, and its faithful admonitions inflicted the keenest anguish. It was during one of these moments, that she retired to her room, self-condemned and unhappy. It was the Sabbath evening; and, during the two hours of study, she had been reading again (perhaps for the twentieth time) "The Decision." Little conversation passed between the two friends, while preparing for bed; and Lydia, according to her custom, extinguished the light. She bade Helen good night, but she could not go to sleep; restless and miserable, she sat on the side of her bed, and burst into tears. Her sobs attracted the attention of Helen, who, immediately rising, intreated her to communicate the cause of her distress.

"O-Helen! I am continually offending God; I know the way of truth, yet persist in refusing to follow it. I laugh and trifle on the brink of ruin, and obstinately reject the Saviour who died for me. The example and sentiments of Gertrude have pierced my very heart; yet I cannot resolve to seek the Lord in earnest; or, if I did resolve, it would only be as usual, to break my resolutions. Oh! what shall I do? I am indeed a miserable creature!"

Helen threw her arms around her friend's neck, and wept an sympathetic sorrow. It was long before she could speak; but at length she said, with great emotion, "My dearest Lydia, believe me, your Helen is much worse than you are. I, too, trifle with my convictions, yet do not feel my misery as you do. But pray do be comforted; I am sure you have every reason to be so; for you know Miss Mortimer often says, that it is a sign of grace when we feel our sinfulness."

This, however, was not exactly the kind of comfort which Lydia's case required; and the two friends continued mingling their tears together, till fatigue and weariness drove them to seek refuge in sleep. The next day they resolved to watch, and strive against sin; and their conduct, for a short time, was more serious and consistent. But, alas! they rested on their own strength, and, like a broken staff, it mocked their vain confidence. "Their goodness was a morning-cloud; and like the early dew it faded away." The world and their passions regained their wonted influence; and their serious impressions once more vanished, without producing any fruit.

O ye, whose youthful hearts have been taught to feel something of the power of divine truth, beware how you wound a tender conscience, and grieve the Spirit of God, by slighting his gracious admonitions. Beware lest you strew a dying pillow with thorns, or draw upon you that most awful sentence,—*"Ephraim is joined to idols,—LET HIM ALONE!"*

CHAPTER XII.

ROMISH IDOLATRY.

God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.—JOHN IV. 24.

THE winter season had now set in, and the Christmas festival was eagerly expected. Many of the French boarders anticipated a short visit to their friends, during the few holidays which were then given. To the English girls, indeed, the prospect was far from being so bright; but some of them had acquaintances in the town, or its vicinity, who would naturally invite them to spend a few days with their families; and, even to those who had not these

advantages, it was something delightful to enjoy a temporary relaxation from intense study.

"Will you go to the Midnight Mass, Emily?" asked Miss Lushington, as they were walking in the garden one evening about a week before Christmas.

"I don't understand you, dear Anna."

"Oh! you don't know, I suppose, what the Midnight Mass is. Well, I will tell you. It is a ceremony performed on Christmas eve, and I assure you it is very grand. The cathedral is brilliantly lighted, and the music beyond everything beautiful. They have also a representation of Christ in the manger; but I suppose you will not like that, for they prostrate themselves before it, and you will say it is idolatry."

"My opinion of Popish superstition is not likely, I fear, to become more favorable, from witnessing the ceremony you speak of. But do all the young ladies go?"

"Oh, no! only a few are allowed that privilege, as the cold night air makes it rather dangerous; but, if you wish to see the sight, I dare say you can accompany one of the teachers."

"I have a great curiosity to witness every characteristic feature of the church of Rome, and shall therefore go, if I have an opportunity. But the more I know of Popery, the more thankful do I feel, that my lot has been cast in a country which is comparatively free from its baneful influence."

Miss Douglas, Caroline, and Lydia, having also expressed a great desire to see the Midnight Mass, Mademoiselle Laval kindly engaged to take them all under her protection, should the weather be favorable, and Madame d'Elfort consent to their going. The night, however, happening to be stormy, that lady declared she would only allow Emily and Caroline to accompany her; but Rose de Liancourt, after many pressing entreaties, was subsequently permitted to join their party. She was the only French young lady who manifested a desire to attend.

It was about half-past eleven, when they entered the spacious cathedral. It was splendidly illuminated; the high altar was surmounted by a wreath of brilliant lamps, and the others profusely ornamented with tapers. The congregation was numerous, and almost every one had brought a small taper, to increase the general glare. The priests, in their magnificent robes, were beginning to celebrate mass; and the whole presented a spectacle of imposing splendor. Emily gazed on the glittering pageant, and sighed; for she thought on Him whose birth it was intended to commemorate, and felt how unacceptable all those services must be, while an empty form was substituted for spiritual worship, and the glad tidings he came to bring concealed beneath the veil of error and superstition. She thought of his lowly manger;—of his obscure and indigent state;—his humility, and aversion

to display;—and her heart turned with disgust from a scene which appeared to her little better than mockery.

The service, however, proceeded, and she began to feel its fascinating power. The music was not only exquisitely beautiful, but peculiarly solemn and affecting. Her senses were soon chained in a sort of unconscious rapture, and the reality of the scene seemed lost, in a thousand ecstatic feelings. The great bell tolled slowly the hour of Midnight; it was answered by the loud chanting of the priests, the swelling anthems of the singers, and the thundering peals of the organ. The scene, the hour, the music, all conspired to overwhelm the mind with a kind of transporting awe. Emily closed her eyes, and was scarcely conscious of her own existence, when her attention was arrested by a deep-drawn sigh, and, turning round with a start, she saw Caroline supported by Mademoiselle Laval, who had with some difficulty prevented her from falling. The fainting girl was immediately conveyed to the outer door for air, and as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, the whole party returned to Madame d'Elfort's. The next morning, on being told that Miss Howard had been so much affected by the ceremony as to have been conveyed out of the church in a fainting state, that lady took the opportunity of expatiating, with evident triumph, on the solemnity of the Catholic service, and its peculiar adaptation to the worship of a great and glorious God. No remarks were made in answer; but Emily could not divest herself of an undefined feeling of uneasiness, when she reflected on the effect which these things seemed invariably to produce on the mind of Caroline.

The morning of Christmas-day was one of bustle and preparation. The Roman Catholics spent nearly the whole of the day in church, and the Protestants were allowed to attend chapel in the morning. They dined together on their return, and the kindness of Madame d'Elfort favored them with roast beef, instead of boiled, as a treat, in memory of English Christmas dinners. This was an unusual occurrence, and the children enjoyed it accordingly; but many a sorrowful lamentation was uttered, for the nice plum-puddings of dear England, and, above all, for the merry gambols, and joyous family parties, which so generally distinguish and endear that day.

The weather being very fine, they were taken in the afternoon to see various exhibitions in miniature, consisting of small managers, in which were laid dolls, dressed like infants in swaddling clothes, and surrounded by others, intended to represent the Virgin, Joseph, and the wise men of the east. This is a very favorite amusement at Christmas, and is resorted to by many of the poor, for the purpose of collecting small sums of money, by exhibiting these managers to their richer neighbors. The young ladies were then sent into the school-room, where they were required to study

till supper-time, in order to prepare for the monthly examinations, which were to take place in a few days. Thus ended Christmas-day, and the English girls who had remained in the house retired to bed, fatigued and dispirited, and breathing the ardent wish, that the next might be spent within the hallowed precincts of their own happy homes.

Three or four months now glided away, without any material change in the sentiments or conduct of the little English party. Emily continued to pursue a steady course of unostentatious usefulness. Caroline was as reserved as before, and, though she paid the same attention to her religious duties, invariably shunned all conversation on serious subjects. But her silence was unspeakably distressing to Emily, who saw that she was perplexed and unhappy. Emily, however, could discover no positive grounds, on which she might found an application for their removal from school; and she therefore waited, with indescribable anxiety, for the expiration of their allotted year, applying, at the same time, with the most intense and unceasing attention, to the acquisition of the language, in order that no pretext might be found for their being condemned to a longer stay.

Lydia and Helen continued to seek her society, and listen with interest to her advice; but, alas! they seldom reduced to practice the instructions they so much loved. Their actions were too generally guided by passion or feeling, or influenced by circumstances; and, as their wavering minds were perpetually tossed to and fro, with every wind of temptation, they frequently experienced that painful alarm and depression of soul which invariably attend an unsettled religious state.

Louisa maintained a tolerable consistency of conduct; but she, too, was far from being happy. She neglected the habitual watchfulness which is so necessary to a holy and comfortable walk; and the inevitable consequence was, a too frequent yielding to the more subtle temptations which surrounded her. The volatile Emma had now fallen into all the gay and pernicious customs of the French; and little Agnes Beverley was not only immersed in the frivolities of the place, but daily imbibing the spirit of Roman Catholic error and delusion.

The austerities of Lent had been mitigated to the English, so far as to allow the use of meat three times a week. But this abstinence was now drawing to a close, and the joy of the Catholics was too great to admit of concealment. They looked forward to Easter, as to a season of feasting, with an eagerness which furnished a striking proof of the absurdity and uselessness of compulsory restrictions.

Good Friday is the only day in the year, on which mass is not celebrated:—it being asserted by the church, that the expiating sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ is renewed on that day, in a

peculiar and efficacious manner. Emily did not neglect the opportunity of pointing out to her friends the passages of scripture she had herself examined on the subject, and which so decidedly contradict this antichristian notion, by declaring that "Christ was *once* offered, to bear the sins of many," that "he offered *one* sacrifice for sins," and that "by *one* offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." They read together the ninth and tenth chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews, which so expressly condemn the idolatry of the mass, and even Caroline agreed in the unavoidable conclusions to be drawn from them.

The evening before Good Friday, a singular arrangement was made at the Cathedral. The great altar was overhung with a magnificent canopy, and ornamented with wreaths of artificial flowers. The whole was illuminated with a great number of tapers, and the box containing the sacramental wafer deposited in the midst, surrounded with flowers, and perfumed with incense. This was called Paradise, and intended to represent the Saviour's rest in the tomb. During the morning-service, the Cathedral was suddenly darkened, to imitate that mysterious and awful gloom which shrouded the face of nature, when the earth trembled to its foundations, and the affrighted sun retreated from the view of his Maker's sufferings.

The English pupils were allowed to attend the Protestant chapel in the morning and some of them afterwards accompanied a teacher to hear an afternoon sermon in the cathedral. The preacher was a good orator, and exhausted all the powers of his rhetoric to describe the Redeemer's passion. But how cold, how lifeless, did the whole performance appear to Emily, for it had none of that sweet savor of the gospel; none of that simple, but touching eloquence, which, borrowing all its energy from the pure word of God, appeals with irresistible force to the heart! While describing that part of the Saviour's sufferings, when his murderers, fearing, perhaps, that he might expire under the weight of his cross, and thus frustrate their cruel purpose, compelled Simon the Cyrenian to assist him in bearing it, the preacher informed his hearers that this action was a significant emblem, representing the necessity which believers were under, of completing the work of their salvation, by the aid of voluntary sufferings, mortifications, and acts of self-denial.

"Oh!" thought Emily, shocked at this blasphemous assertion, "how deplorable would be my condition, if, instead of striving after holiness with a view to glorify God, and evince my gratitude for that finished salvation which he has wrought out, I were reduced to the necessity of accomplishing it myself! Alas! I must inevitably perish, if Christ *alone* cannot save me!"

She turned an inquiring look on Caroline's countenance. It denoted great perplexity of thought, and its prevailing expression

was one of deep mental distress. The tears rushed to Emily's eyes, and her heart became solely occupied with anxiety for her cousin, till, at the conclusion of the service, they returned to Madame d'Elfort's.

In the evening, it was proposed to visit the cathedral once more, for the purpose of surveying at leisure the beautiful *paradise*. A glowing description of it had been given by those young ladies who had before witnessed similar exhibitions, and Emily resolved to go with the others, if she could first ascertain that no semblance of idolatrous worship would be exacted at the altar. She inquired of Miss Lushington, and one or two others, who replied, that they had knelt like the French, but could not say whether or not it was absolutely necessary. She, therefore, approached Madame d'Elfort, who was sitting alone in a window recess, and, seating herself by her side, entered into conversation with her. The subject of the exhibition being soon introduced, the governess kindly invited her pupil to see it, assuring her it would well repay her curiosity.

"I should like to go," said Emily, timidly, "but, Madame, is it expected that *every one* should kneel?"

Madame d'Elfort turned on her pupil a scrutinizing glance. "Surely," observed she, "you would not think of approaching so sacred and affecting a representation, in any other posture than a kneeling one?"

Emily's eyes were instantly bent on the ground, and she returned no answer. This silence would soon have become unpleasant to both parties, had not Madame d'Elfort's sister, who related with her, called away her attention to some other subject.

This lady was, in many respects, different from her sister, and had much more of the character of her nation. She was very handsome, gay, and thoughtless, but exceedingly amiable, kind-hearted, and indulgent to excess. She was a universal favorite with the young ladies; for they could often obtain from her what they would scarcely have dared to ask from any one else.

Emily was retiring to her own room, when this lady inquired, "if she would accompany a party of young ladies, who were going to the cathedral under her guidance?"

Emily thanked her politely, but informed her that she had no intention of going.

"So much the worse for you!" exclaimed Madame d'Arblay, turning away with quickness, and evidently piqued at the refusal.

"Why, surely, Miss Mortimer," observed Fanny Gordon, who was putting on her bonnet to go, "you will not lose the opportunity of seeing so magnificent a sight!"

"I cannot go," replied Emily, "for my principles will not allow me to bow the knee to an idol."

"What hypocrisy!" exclaimed Miss Parker, with a sneer she hurried past on her way to the church. Fanny Gordon and Catharine Stanhope shrugged their shoulders, with a contemptuous smile, and even the good-natured Miss Lushington's countenance assumed an expression of pity.

"Nonsense, Emily!" observed she, "if your scruples are very great, you may at least venture to go with Madame d'Arblay. You know she is very indulgent, and I am sure she will not scold even if you remain standing. Come, do be persuaded, and do not make yourself so ridiculous."

"Thank you, dear Anna, for your kind solicitude on my account, but I think it is safer not to tempt the danger." So said she as she was ascending the staircase, when she again met Madame d'Arblay who was followed by Caroline.

"You will not, then, accompany your cousin, Madame Mortimer?" inquired that lady, as she drew Caroline's arm and hers, and, with a bland smile, offered the other to Emily.

A sudden revulsion of feeling caused the blood to rush to Emily's cheek to her heart. She felt an irresistible desire to censure Caroline's conduct at the cathedral, and, requesting Madame d'Arblay to wait for her a moment, hurried on her shawl and bonnet, and rejoined her in the hall.

Both the cousins were much agitated, and Emily scarcely allowed herself to think. When they entered the cathedral, Lord Helen, and Lydia, approached her in the crowd, with looks of consternation.

"Oh! Miss Mortimer!" exclaimed they, "what shall we do? We could not, you know, refuse to come; but shall we be obliged to kneel?"

"You cannot, surely, think of doing so!" replied she, with hesitancy, yet feeling, at the same time, self-condemned, and with a consciousness that she herself was running into temptation. The two parties were immediately separated, and, pressing her hand on her throbbing heart, as if she could thus calm the agitation of her thoughts, she tremblingly followed Madame d'Arblay to the high altar.

A feeling of indescribable awe crept over her, as she contemplated the illusive pageant. Her excited imagination was no proof against the imposing splendor and solemn silence of the place. Convinced as she felt, of the real mockery concealed under this apparent reverence, she could not entirely resist the fascinating spell which it was so well calculated to throw over her senses. She cast a hasty glance around her, and observed that no other party not far from her, with Madame Laval at their head. They were all on their knees, except Louisa and Lydia, whose bending posture seemed intended as a sort of compromise between fear and duty.

Her eyes were now fearfully directed towards Caroline, who was leaning, half fainting, against the back of a chair. Her eyes were closed, as if to conceal or suppress her emotion; but the pallid cheek and quivering lip too plainly betrayed an inward conflict. A heavy sigh somewhat relieved Emily's oppressed heart, and she, too, placed her hand before her eyes, to shut out the scene altogether from her view.

A slight movement near her roused her attention; she raised her head, and saw Madame d'Elfort, kneeling at the altar, with another party of her school-fellows. A lightning-glance of displeasure escaped that lady, as she observed the two cousins standing; but no further notice was taken of the circumstance, although Emily observed, on leaving the cathedral, that the sparkling countenance of Madame d'Arblay was slightly overcast by a frown.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NUNS OF ST. THOMAS.

For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.—Rom. x. 3.

THE anxious and contending feelings which so incessantly occupied the mind of Emily, joined to the extreme severity of the winter, and the total absence of everything like English comfort, now began to manifest their effects on a delicate constitution. She was seized with a low, nervous fever, which, though it soon yielded to the efforts of medical skill, left her in a state of great weakness, and incapacitated her for active exertion.

Nothing could exceed the tenderness and affection shown her by her friends, but especially by Caroline, and Mademoiselle de Liancourt. The latter, indeed, could seldom pass much time with her, in consequence of the almost monastic strictness which pervaded every rule of the house; but the former seemed entirely to have resumed her former character, and to be only alive to the health and comfort of the beloved invalid. There was but one subject on which the most perfect confidence did not exist between them; but there was an unembarrassed freedom in her manner, which seemed to Emily the dawn of a brighter day; and hope again smiled, as she pointed to the future.

As the intensity of the cold abated, and Emily began to recover her strength and spirits, the physician advised that she should take as much exercise as possible. Madame Dorville, an intimate friend of Madame d'Elfort's, who had always manifested a great partiality for the cousins, now offered to accompany them in frequent excursions to the country—and generally took Emily out every fine day for a walk. The lady possessed a highly cultivated mind, and great vivacity of disposition: she was, therefore, a most agreeable companion, and particularly insinuating in her manners. Her conversation was eminently sensible, varied, and interesting; and her penetrating insight into character, gave her considerable influence over those with whom she associated. Her attachment to the religion she professed amounted to positive bigotry, and she had long wished for an opportunity of converting the young persons she now patronized. She would not, indeed, openly attack their principles, but resolved to set all the fascinations connected with her religion before their eyes in the light which she saw would be most likely to produce a powerful impression on their minds.

With this view, she one day invited them to pay a visit to one of the hospitals. They gladly accepted the proposal; for, besides the lively interest which an institution for the relief of suffering humanity must excite in every feeling mind, their curiosity was not a little awakened, by the description of the nuns of St. Thomas, who, they were informed, fulfilled all the duties of nurses to the sick in those establishments.

"You can form no idea," said Madame Dorville, as they proceeded to the hospital, "of the exalted virtues which distinguish these benevolent ladies. No sacrifice seems too great, no undertaking too painful, no act of condescension too humiliating for their piety and charity. Born in the highest and most respectable circles,—educated in the most delicate manner, and accustomed to move in the most brilliant society, they forsake their families, their comforts, and all the allurements of the world, to embrace a life of self-denial, and stoop to the most degrading offices! They pass their days and nights by the beds of the sick and afflicted; they dress their wounds, prepare their medicines, administer their nourishment, soothe their pains, sympathize in their sorrows, and either contribute essentially to their recovery, or smoothe with angel hands their passage to the grave. Is not *this* sublime devotedness? Is not *this* the most exalted piety?"

Emily was spared the necessity of answering this subtle question, by their entering a small church, which was connected with the hospital. Madame Dorville dipped her finger in the basin of holy water at the door, and crossed herself; a profound silence ensued, while they walked up the centre aisle of the building, and observed the different objects it contained. It was distinguished by the same gorgeous magnificence which everywhere marks Ro-

man Catholic places of worship. The principal altar was profusely decorated with silver candlesticks, wax tapers, and rich paintings. Several inferior altars were placed in small chapels devoted to the saints, along the two sides of the church. An air of mysterious solemnity seemed to pervade the whole place. A few infirm old people were repeating their prayers in different spots; and the figure of one of the nuns, kneeling at a side altar, not a little heightened the picturesque effect of the scene.

Having remained a few minutes absorbed in contemplation, Madame Dorville led the way to the hospital. She stopped a few minutes at the door, to speak to a former servant of Madame d'Elfort's, who, being disabled by a rheumatic complaint, had been lately received into the institution. Jeannette had not left Madame d'Elfort's till some time after the arrival of Emily and Caroline; they were extremely partial to her, for they had always found her particularly obliging; and the poor girl was delighted to see them again. She was about to lead them to the room on the first floor of the building, when the lady they had before seen in the church passed by them, and, bowing in silence, entered the apartment before them.

"The mother is going to read the *chapelet*," said Jeannette, dropping a curtesy, "and as these young ladies are not Catholics, they had better wait till it is over before they enter."

So saying, she led them into a small side-room, and instantly returned for prayers.

The little apartment in which they now were, might well have been taken for a druggist's shop, so completely was it furnished with every kind of medicine and cordial restorative. These were arranged with the greatest order and neatness, and presented a picture at once pleasing to the eye, and grateful to the feelings.

"These are all prepared by the ladies themselves," said Madame Dorville; "they study pharmacy, that they may be able to compound all the medicines that are necessary in the house. The lady who just now passed us is Maria Thérèse de Joinville. She belongs to one of the first families of the town. At the age of seventeen she renounced all the pleasures of fashionable life, and evinced the strongest desire to take the veil; but her family were decidedly opposed to her wishes: they tried every method to detain her in the world, and absolutely forbade the sacrifice she meditated. She, however, was steadfast in her purpose, and persevered in it, notwithstanding every kind of discouragement. Having at length surmounted every obstacle, and wrung a reluctant consent from her family, she took the veil at nineteen, and has now been eighteen years the constant attendant on the poor of this hospital. Before that period, I was intimately acquainted with her, and never have I known a young person more engaging, or better calculated to shine in society. But her devotedness to the cause of

religion and humanity, has left me at so immense a distance from her, that I feel as if she were now a being of another world."

Madame Dorville's enthusiasm, while she spoke of her friend, seemed to have communicated itself to the minds of her young auditors, for Emily felt much moved, and Caroline's eyes were suffused with tears. Jeannette now re-entered the apartment, and offered to conduct them to *la mère Joinville*;—the familiar and endearing appellation of *mother* being that by which these ladies are invariably addressed by the poor.

The *religieuse* met them at the door of her ward, and received them with the most engaging politeness. She was an interesting woman, with a countenance peculiarly expressive of every amiable feeling, but evidently in very delicate health.

The apartment which they now entered was of great length, and occupied two sides of the building. It was extremely clean and airy, and the long rows of beds looked very comfortable. In the angle formed by the middle of the room was an altar, over which was placed a figure of the Virgin. The sick and infirm persons in this room had an appearance of content and comfort, which was truly gratifying, and they all seemed to regard the *mother* with feelings of veneration and love.

"I should think," said Madame Dorville to the nun, after they had walked through the ward, spoken to some of the patients, and inquired into the cases of others,—“that, in addition to the painful nature of the duties you have to perform, you must sometimes be in great danger from infectious disorders.”

“True,” replied the nun, “but the good God in whom we trust, and for whose sake we do everything, has generally preserved us. During the war with England, we sometimes had seven or eight hundred soldiers under our care, wounded, dying, or attacked with contagious disorders. To meet the numberless wants of these poor creatures, to undergo all the fatigue attendant on the care of them, and to fulfil all the laborious duties of the establishment, there were only twenty of us, assisted by a few of the infirm old men and women residing here. Yet no sister suffered materially; and, after all, our employments are less trying than those of the Grey Sisters.”

“Well, your charity is certainly beyond all praise,” observed Madame Dorville, after the *religieuse* had led them through two other apartments, similar to her own. “I see that my two young friends here are struck with admiration, and I am sure they would feel very much inclined to follow your example, though Miss Howard's countenance certainly betrays at this moment, a great want of the courage necessary for such an undertaking.”

The nun looked at the pallid cheeks of Caroline, and observing that the scene had too much affected her spirits, led the way to her own little apartment, near the centre of her ward.

"Have I not heard you say, Miss Mortimer," inquired Madame Dorville of Emily, "that you would like very much to be a *religieuse de la charité*?"

Before she could answer, Madame de Joinville asked, with a peculiar expression, "Are these young ladies Catholics?"

Caroline started, and Emily could not suppress a smile, but Madame Dorville answered, in a tone of sadness, "Alas, no!"

"Ah! then," observed the nun, in the same tone, "there is a great deal to be done, before Mademoiselle could become one of us."

"I should be very unhappy, indeed," observed Emily, still smiling, "if I did not consider myself a true Catholic."

The nun looked surprised, and requested that she would explain herself.

"You refuse us that title," continued Emily, "but we claim it as our just right; for we belong to the only true church—the universal church of Christ."

"Oh! I understand you now; you mean that you are an *Apostolic*, but not a *Roman Catholic*."

Emily assented, and Madame Dorville observed, with that insinuating flattery so characteristic of her nation.

"If my young friends are not Catholics, they want but that 'one thing needful;' for they are everything else that can be wished, in talents, in goodness, and piety".....

Emily and Caroline interrupted her, by disclaiming the excellences she attributed to their characters; but, however disgusted and annoyed by her flattery, they could not arrest her voluble tongue, till the former at length observed, that, admitting they did indeed possess all these exalted virtues and advantages, they would be but additional motives for gratitude and humility.

"Humility!" exclaimed Madame Dorville, "I can scarcely conceive how they can produce humility."

"How can a creature," inquired Emily, "be proud of what she has received as a free gift, from the hand of her Creator? Would you not, Madam, think it exceedingly absurd, for a destitute beggar to glory in the alms which have been bestowed upon him?"

Madame Dorville made no answer, but the nun and she looked significantly at each other. After a few unimportant remarks, the former asked Emily why she did not acknowledge the pope as the head of the church?

"Because, madam, I do not believe that he has any scriptural right to assume that title."

The nun referred to St. Matthew xvi. 18, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," and inquired, if she did not acknowledge that passage to be the word of God?

"I do, madam, but the meaning you attach to it is plainly con-

tradicted by numerous other parts of Scripture. The Bible tells us that Christ is 'the Rock,' the 'chief corner stone,' and the 'only foundation.'

"Beware, mademoiselle," exclaimed the *religieuse*, hastily interrupting her, "that you do not give the Holy Scriptures an erroneous sense. But pray, do tell me, on what is your religion founded?"

"On the Bible, madam; I am not only a Protestant by education and habit, but I am one from principle and conviction. Were I not perfectly satisfied that my religion is the most agreeable to Scripture, I should immediately renounce it."

"But your parents, probably, would feel highly displeased, were you to take such a step."

"Admitting that such were the case, I do not think that even parental influence ought to prevail in a case of conscience. I trust I am too deeply sensible of the importance of eternal things, to risk my soul on mere earthly considerations; and I again repeat that were I not perfectly convinced, perfectly satisfied, from the sure testimony of scripture, of the excellency of the Protestant faith;—had I but the smallest doubt on the subject, I would give myself no rest, till I had discovered a better way; and when I had found it, I hope no human influence would prevent my following it."

"But have you taken pains to be rightly informed on the subject? Have you well examined the grounds of difference between us? Have you consulted able theologians, or other persons capable of giving you every necessary information?"

"I have read and reflected much, but have applied to no theologians; and, were it possible for me to consult all the learned men in the world, what would it avail me in this case? Their opinions would be, after all, but the opinions of men, and I should not dare to venture my eternal interests on so sandy a foundation."

"But you are not to expect that God will work a miracle, to convince you, without the aid of human agency."

"True, madam; God does not generally work without means, but he has given us a revelation of his will, which is sufficiently clear and explicit. It becomes us to bend in humble obedience to that divine will; to 'search the Scriptures,' and pray for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, that we may discover the right way; to try our opinions, as well as our conduct, by the test of God's holy Word; and to abide entirely by its decision."

"You see, my dear Marie Thérèse," said Madame Dorville, rising, "that my young friend knows more on the subject of religion than you do."

This was uttered in a half ironical tone; but the nun replied, with great apparent humility,

"That is very possible, for my knowledge is extremely limited;

but religion does not consist in knowledge alone; it is *faith* that saves us."

"We are, indeed, 'saved by grace through faith,' " observed Emily, with peculiar emphasis; "but, my dear madam, can faith have a better foundation than the revealed will of God? I have prayed, and do earnestly pray, that he would enable me to understand that will aright: why, then, should I seek for human information, on a subject respecting which I am already satisfied, from the unerring testimony of him 'who cannot lie?'"

The nun now gave up the contest, with an expressive look of compassion, and the visitors prepared to depart. As they left the *relicuse*, Emily said to her,

"My dear madam, since you do not believe me to be in the right way, I hope you will pray for me, that God may teach me the true knowledge of his will; and though we are separated here by the differences of religious worship, it is my earnest wish that we may meet in the same heaven."

The nun responded a fervent amen to the wish, though with a look of melancholy doubt, and promised to remember Emily in her prayers.

Caroline had been particularly attentive to the conversation at the hospital, though she had preserved an almost unbroken silence. Madame Dorville, after an interval of deep thoughtfulness, during their way home, at length resumed the conversation.

"If your religion is the true one, Miss Mortimer, allow me to ask you, how it is that so much indifference exists among you Protestants, respecting the eternal welfare of those you believe to be in error? There can be but one true faith; and as we conceive ours to be that faith, we are most anxious to bring others over to our way of thinking. Every true Catholic will seize any opportunity that may present itself, for promoting the conversion and eternal welfare of those who, he knows, must perish if they remain in error; but, though I have met with a great number of Protestants, and many, too, who were considered very religious, I have never seen one who would make the least attempt to convert those whose religion he condemned. Does not this apathetic indifference argue, either a total want of sincerity in their profession, or very little confidence in the goodness of their cause?"

Emily felt that this keen reproof was but too well deserved, and blushed for the inconsistency of professed Christians. "You must remember, madam," observed she, "that the Protestants you have conversed with were living in a Roman Catholic country, and may have been deterred, by that circumstance, from attacking the religion of its inhabitants. But, as all who profess to be Christians are not really such, we cannot be surprised that those who care little for their own souls, should feel indifferent about the salvation of others."

They were now near Madame d'Elfort's residence, and their conductress proposed paying a short visit to the Grey sisters, before they re-entered the house.

"Have you ever seen these excellent and devoted women?" inquired she, turning to Caroline. "Your cousin, I know, has paid them a visit, but perhaps you would not dislike doing the same."

The thoughtful countenance of Caroline assumed an ashy paleness; she complained of a severe headache, and, declining the proposed visit, they returned to Madame d'Elfort's.

Madame Derville remained to supper, and, having led the conversation to the subject of the hospital, related some particulars of their evening's excursion. Madame d'Elfort inquired, what her pupils thought of the nuns of St. Thomas. Emily and Caroline spoke with admiration of their devotedness, upon which their governess exclaimed,

"Yes, they do indeed *deserve heaven!*"

Emily felt shocked, at having given occasion for so revolting an observation. Had she dared to answer, she would immediately have refuted the error it contained, with the inspired words of the prophet Isaiah, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," or the Saviour's injunction to his disciples, "When ye shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants." But it was not permitted her to do this, and she was compelled to keep silence, till an opportunity offered for changing the conversation.

CHAPTER XIV.

CLAIRE DE LIANCOURT.

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? Who hath required this at your hand?—ISAIAH I. 11, 12.

PREPARATIONS were now making throughout the town, for what is called the first communion. The children of Roman Catholic parents are introduced to auricular confession at the age of seven, and at ten they are admitted to partake of the Lord's Supper. On this occasion there is always a family feast, and the young communicant is quite the hero or heroine of the day. On Emily's ex-

pressing some surprise to Madame d'Arblay, that they should be admitted to the most solemn ordinance of religion, before they could well comprehend anything of its nature, that lady observed, that their youth formed their best qualification, "as their hearts were still *pure*, and unpolluted by an intercourse with the world."

"Oh!" thought Emily, "how contrary to the declarations of scripture, that 'the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.'"

Rose de Liancourt was deeply engaged in preparing her younger sister for the occasion. Little Claire, who was particularly attached to Emily, had been, for the last four months, forbidden by her confessor and governess to hold any unnecessary intercourse with her, lest the society and caresses of a heretic should corrupt her mind, and unfit her for that important act, on which depended her future character. She was continually told, that "if her first communion was not perfectly good, it would have a most baneful influence on her future life;" and she, therefore, habitually shunned her former friend, though her affectionate disposition often frustrated every precaution.

The intended communicants, after having gone through a long course of catechetical instruction, were, during the last week, exempted from every secular duty, and incessantly employed in preparatory exercises. They went to church for a considerable time every day, and were studiously secluded from all intercourse with the Protestants. Their dress was an object of the greatest importance, they paraded the streets in the most elegant attire, and their youthful minds were entirely absorbed by the gratification of vanity, and the observances of superstition. Those children in the school whose parents lived at no great distance, were dressed for church every day by the hand of maternal pride; and Rose, whose mother was unable thus to manifest her affection, descended regularly from the school-room, to attend on the youthful Claire.

Three days before the intended ceremony, the children went in procession to renew their baptismal vow. On this occasion, Rose was prevented from performing her usual office, for she was suddenly called home, in consequence of some domestic occurrences of a painful nature. The distance was not great, but the length of her stay seemed uncertain; she, therefore, requested of Madame d'Elfort, that her little sister might be dressed by Miss Mortimer, during her absence. The governess seemed reluctant to grant this permission; but, knowing the affection that subsisted between these two young persons, and being unwilling to grieve the already oppressed heart of Rose, she consented, on condition that Mademoiselle Saint-André, the junior teacher, should alone superintend the religious duties of Claire.

Emily was writing to Mrs. Somerville, when Rose suddenly entered her room. Her step was hurried, and her face swollen with weeping. "I have come to entreat a favor," said she, grasping Emily's hand; and without waiting for an answer, she continued, in an agitated voice, "My father has sent for me, and I am compelled to leave Claire on the eve of her first communion. I know that her religious duties will be attended to, but oh! she will want a sister's hand to dress her,—a sister's care to ensure her comfort. Will you, my dear, dear friend, supply that sister's place? To your tenderness alone can I confide my sweet Claire."

"Dearest Rose!" said Emily, with surprise, "how can I undertake such a charge? Madame d'Elfort will not entrust her to a Protestant, more especially at this moment....."

"Madame d'Elfort has consented. Oh! say that you do not refuse. You cannot, you will not, dearest Emily! and I shall now go without anxiety, for I know you enough, to be perfectly certain that you will not interfere with her religion."

"But how long will you be absent, Rose?"

"I know not, my beloved friend; perhaps I may never return. Trials and sorrows are fast gathering around me. Pray for your poor Rose! Farewell, I must be gone."

At that moment a loud voice from below rudely calling Mademoiselle de Liancourt, made her start with affright; and hastily disengaging herself from Emily's embrace, she hurried down stairs. Emily looked through the window and saw her enter a carriage, with a coarse-looking woman, whose dress seemed to denote her a kind of upper servant.

In the afternoon, Mademoiselle Saint-André entered Emily's room, leading little Claire by the hand.

"I have brought you Mademoiselle Claire," said she, with a look of mingled scorn and displeasure, "in order that you may dress her for church. Her sister wished it, and Madame d'Elfort has consented; but you are not to speak a word to her on the subject of religion."

"I shall obey the commands of Madame d'Elfort, and the wishes of my friend," replied Emily calmly, but with dignity.

The teacher tossed her head, in a manner peculiar to herself, when she chose to express her displeasure, and left the apartment. This young lady had, from the first, manifested a jealous dislike of Emily, and the preference now shown to the latter by Rose had so piqued her self-importance, that it was not surprising she should display a little ill-nature on the occasion.

Emily being now left alone with her young charge, began to perform her office of waiting-maid, by attiring her in the fine muslin dress, and rich cap, prepared for the occasion. Claire talked of her sister, as if she anticipated her speedy return, ex-

pressed her delight at being under Miss Mortimer's care during her absence, and occasionally betrayed the vanity so natural in her situation, by calling her friend's attention to the different parts of her dress, with an evident desire to elicit admiration. Emily, however, was absorbed in sorrowful meditation, on the injurious tendency of this foolish display, and scarcely heeded her prattle, till the little girl held up a valuable necklace of pearls, and inquired if she did not admire her sister's beautiful present?

"It is very elegant," said Emily, as she clasped it round the child's neck, "but, my dear little Claire, do not be so much occupied with your dress. I am sure your sister would not approve of it, nor was that her intention, in giving you the necklace."

Claire blushed at the rebuke, and was silent for a moment; then, taking up a cross which was suspended to the necklace, she said,

"Now, my dear Miss Mortimer, you will not think me vain, for prizing this little cross. It is only of plain gold, but I would not part with it for ten times its value; for it has been consecrated by our holy father the Pope, and there are a great many indulgences attached to it."

"Indulgences!" said Lydia, who had just entered the room, "what kind of things are they?"

"Why, Miss Howard, do you not know what indulgences are?" inquired Claire, with surprise. "There are a great many belonging to this cross, and they are very precious."

"Where are they, my dear Claire?" resumed Lydia, examining the cross and necklace, with apparent curiosity. "I cannot see any of them; pray point them out to me."

"They are not such things as beads," replied Claire, looking somewhat mortified and disconcerted. "I tell you they are indulgences from the Pope, and, though we cannot see them, they are not the less valuable."

"But I do not understand what they can be," again objected the provoking Lydia. "Tell me, Claire, are they indulgences for sin?"

"No, certainly, Miss Howard," replied the little girl, half offended at the observation, "but, since you do not use them in your religion, we must not talk about them."

The arch expression of Lydia's countenance indicated a desire to prolong the conversation; but Emily gave her a look of admonition, and advised her to go to her music.

"Do you not know what indulgences are, Miss Mortimer?" inquired little Claire, as soon as Lydia was gone. Emily was silent, and she continued, "What a strange religion yours must be! My confessor says it is a very bad one, and that no heretic can be saved. But I hope you will be a Catholic at last, for you are so good and kind, and I love you so much! and

my sister and I say a pater noster and an ave Maria, every night and morning, for your conversion." So saying, she clasped her arms round Emily's neck, and kissed her several times with childish fondness.

Emily was much affected by this artless declaration. To conceal her emotion, she passed her hand over the glossy brown ringlets of Claire, in order to keep them confined in smooth bands beneath her cap; then kissing the blooming cheek of the little girl, she led her down into the garden, to join the others.

The next day the children were taken in procession to the different churches, and, after spending the greater part of the day in the cathedral, Claire returned home, fatigued and exhausted, and was sent early to bed. The morrow was to be a day of important preparation, and Emily would have been glad to be exempted from the pain of witnessing its occupations.

As it was considered of great consequence that the young communicants should go through the ceremony in a graceful and unembarrassed manner, they were made to practise their parts the day before, by receiving an unconsecrated wafer, in the same way that they would receive the host. Emily had again to dress Claire for this absurd display, which was attended with every circumstance of the most solemn mockery; but, to her inexpressible delight, before Claire returned from the Cathedral, her sister had again become an inmate of the house.

The mild countenance of Rose bore the most distressing marks of recent sorrow. She was pale and haggard, and had evidently wept almost incessantly. Madame d'Elfort, who was well acquainted with her situation and trials, sympathized most kindly in the sweet girl's afflictions. Rose seemed to repose in her governess the most unlimited confidence, and always received from her every mark of affectionate interest. Her spirit seemed to revive, when she found herself restored to the society she loved, and, though her mind was the seat of continual anxiety, her attention was again turned to the approaching festival, in which her sister was to bear so important a part.

After the ceremony of receiving the *communion en blanc*, the children returned home, for the purpose of going through a very affecting scene. This was to entreat the blessing of their parents, governess, and teachers, and also the forgiveness of their companions, for any little offences they might at any time have committed against them. Previous to this act, they listened to a long exhortation from Madame d'Elfort, in her own room.

Emily was in the *salon*, with several young ladies, examining the large wax tapers which the communicants were to carry on the following day, when a gentleman entered, and Ann Lushington whispered in her ear—"the Baron de Liancourt." The young ladies immediately retired, but were met on the threshold by

Rose, who, seizing Emily's hand, drew her back into the room, and introduced her to her father, as the kind friend whom she had so often mentioned to him, and who had taken charge of Claire during her short absence. The baron bowed with graceful politeness, and, in the most flattering terms, expressed his gratitude to Mademoiselle Mortimer, for her affectionate attention to his little girl. He was a man of about fifty, tall and martial in his appearance; his manners were noble and dignified, but his countenance exhibited traces of many evil passions, and there was a sternness in his eye, which struck Emily as peculiarly forbidding. He was just expressing a hope that Miss Mortimer would favor him by visiting his *château*, in company with his daughter, when Madame d'Elfort appeared, leading in the youthful Claire, whose cheek, pale with excessive emotion, indicated a consciousness of being placed in a situation of awful importance. She approached her father with trembling steps, and Emily, anxious to avoid intruding on the scene which she knew was going to take place, bowed in silence to the baron, and glided out of the room.

She had been about half an hour, writing some French exercises, when a gentle tap at her door made her rise to open it, and Rose entered, leading the still-weeping Claire.

"My sister is come to beg your forgiveness," said she, and the little girl threw herself, sobbing, into Emily's arms.

"My forgiveness, dear Rose! I assure you Claire has never offended me."

"Oh, yes! yes!" sobbed the child, "I gave you a great deal of trouble, when you dressed me; and I have sometimes said very foolish things to you; and, besides, you know I must obtain the blessing of all those I am bound to respect."

"May God forgive and bless you, then, my dear little girl," replied Emily, much affected, and straining the sweet pleader to her heart.

The feelings of Claire had been so highly wrought up, during the last hour, that she could not control her agitation, but continued to cry and sob almost hysterically, and without intermission, till her sister made her lie down on her bed, to compose herself before she returned to the cathedral. Having obtained the forgiveness of everybody, and a certificate of good conduct from their governess, the little girls were in the evening re-conducted to church, where, after a final confession, they received absolution, and permission to present themselves at the altar the following morning. On their return to the school, they were regarded with perfect veneration, as little saints entirely freed from sin, and too pure to mix with less holy beings; and, in order to preserve them from contagion, they were secluded in Madame d'Elfort's room, till the hour of their retiring to rest. It was then necessary that some person should be with them, to talk to them

on the subject which ought alone to occupy their thoughts, to read them some suitable exhortation, and make them repeat all the prayers prescribed.

Madame d'Elfort was indisposed, and the teachers could not be spared; that lady, therefore, deputed Rose to be the guardian of the young communicants, declaring, as she did so, with an emphasis which crimsoned the modest cheek of that amiable girl, that she could not have intrusted so important a charge to any other pupil in the house.

As the next day was to be a feast, the evening was chiefly spent in various preparations. To Emily's surprise, she found that Caroline was engaged to spend the day at Madame Dorville's, and was preparing to leave the house with that lady's daughter. Sophia Dorville had lately manifested a great partiality for her, and Emily could not object to the arrangement, though she suffered a little uneasiness in consequence of it.

Emily retired to her room somewhat earlier than usual. She had hardly taken up her Bible, with the intention of reading a little, when she was suddenly startled by a suppressed sob, which proceeded from the chamber of Rose. She arose, much alarmed, and without pausing to reflect, hastened to the spot, and opened the door without knocking. She saw Rose, just rising from her knees, with a book in one hand, and a rosary in the other. Perceiving that she had intruded on her devotions, Emily was retiring in some confusion, when an irresistible desire to comfort her afflicted friend made her pause and turn back. Rose met her at the door, and embraced her without speaking. She, too, was evidently confused and her face was bathed in tears.

"My dearest friend!" said Emily, "will you not allow me to sympathize in your sorrows? You are unhappy, Rose. Oh! that I could comfort, or assist you!"

"Alas! that is beyond your power, my beloved and kind Emily; but I will reveal to you a part of my misery. I have just seen the communicants retire to rest, and watched over the last waking moments of my sweet little Claire; dear, innocent little creatures! they are so holy and happy! I envied them their feelings, for I remembered mine, when placed in the same situation. Oh! I have never been so happy since, for my heart has never been so devoted to God, so free from the influence of sinful thoughts and worldly feelings; and I felt oppressed with a load of insupportable guilt, while Madame d'Elfort's partial commendation overwhelmed me with self-reproach."

Emily could not speak, and after a pause, Rose resumed—"I will not say that this is the *only* subject which at this moment afflicts me. Oh, no! I have sorrows which I must not now disclose, but which, I dare say, you will one day know. But you do not, you cannot possibly imagine the misery of having a heart so

sinful as mine; and just now, while engaged in prayer for the future happiness of Claire, I felt as if no mortification could ever avail, to make *me* holy and happy."

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," at length articulated Emily, almost choked with emotion. Rose devoutly crossed herself, and replied,

"I know it, my dear friend; but we must also be purified by penances and mortifications. Oh! if you knew how much I need them!"

Emily durst not pursue the conversation, for she feared to overstep the bounds of prudence; but she could not help weeping bitterly, at the painful restraint thus laid upon her. To divert her attention from the subject, she approached the little bed of Claire. The sweet child had fallen asleep, with the smile of happiness on her lips. Her soft hair, though smoothly combed down, for the purpose of being disposed in plain *bandeaux* the next morning, had escaped in two or three straggling ringlets down her cheek. "Poor lamb!" thought Emily, as she surveyed her, "must thou, too, be a victim at the shrine of this detestable delusion?" A deep sigh burst from her heart, as she gently pressed her lips on the fair open forehead of Claire. The touch half aroused her; she clasped with her little fingers the hand of Emily, and softly murmured, "Blessed Virgin! make me good and holy like yourself!"

Emily could bear no more. She turned hastily away, and embracing Rose, hurried to her own room, there to pour out her heart in earnest supplication, to him who could alone enlighten the minds thus painfully involved in the gloom of error and delusion.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FIRST COMMUNION.

Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.—ISAIAH LV. 2.

THE morning of the *première communion* was ushered in by the ringing of bells, and, at four o'clock, the children were aroused from their slumbers, to be dressed for the important exhibition.

They were not allowed to take anything, not even a drop of water, previous to going to church. Rose was busily engaged in preparing her sister, and the elegant simplicity of Claire's attire excited the general admiration of the English girls. They could, however, catch but a transient glimpse of her, as her sister conducted her to Madame d'Elfort's apartment, where the young communicants belonging to the school were all assembled. Emily's window overlooked that part of the building, and she and Lydia followed them with their eyes. Rose put a richly-ornamented missal into her sister's hand, and, as she embraced her, suspended a plain gold locket round her neck. She then dismissed her, and, concealing her face with her handkerchief, hurried back to her own room.

"What a sweet creature is Rose!" exclaimed Lydia, as she lost sight of her, "but how very sad she always looks! I am sure she is unhappy, and Mademoiselle Saint André told us last night, that her father was a very wicked man, and that his conduct had driven her mother to distraction."

Emily was too much affected to make any remark on this explanation of poor Rose's melancholy, and Lydia was about to proceed, when Louisa and Helen entered, and informed them that the communicants were just going to set out for the appointed place of general meeting; which was the church belonging to the hospital. They, therefore, descended to the salon, from whence they could see the little train cross the lawn, on their way to the outer gate.

The children were all dressed in white, but the materials of their dress were different, and varied with the inequality of fortune, or the variety of taste. Some were habited in richly embroidered muslins, or *tulle*, while others were only distinguished by the neatness and simplicity of their appearance. Their *pèlerines*, caps, and veils, displayed the same variety. The dress of Claire was of expensive materials, and intended to denote her father's rank; but her sister had contrived to exclude every unnecessary ornament, and her appearance was therefore rather elegant than fine.

The little ones, with Madame d'Elfort at their head, walked slowly and regularly out of the house, with their veils partly thrown back, and partly concealing their faces. They carried in their hands the large, heavy tapers, and were followed by others of their companions, who were going to the sacrament for the second time, and were only distinguished by having no tapers. As they issued from the door, Emily silently pressed the hand of Claire; but the little girl started back, as if she dreaded the touch, and hurried away, without even looking up.

As soon as they were gone, the other pupils were summoned to dress, in order to be ready to follow the procession, when it

should pass the house, on its way to the cathedral. The Catholics went first to church, under the care of Mademoiselle Saint-André, and the others were to await the procession, with Mademoiselle Laval.

They were hardly assembled at the outer gate, when a confused murmur, and the trampling of feet, announced the approach of the pageant. In front of it walked a little girl from the charity-school, carrying a large gilt cross, and two priests with a standard, on which was delineated an image of the Virgin, with an inscription, requiring the children to acknowledge her as their mother. Then followed a choir of young ladies, singing an anthem, in which they were occasionally joined by the priests, who, in great numbers, mixed with the procession. The other children then came on, bearing their immense tapers; the poor and the rich were promiscuously disposed, and presented altogether a very interesting spectacle. It was not difficult to perceive, however, that many of them were far more engrossed by the thoughts of their dress and appearance, than by the occasion which thus brought them under public notice. But this was evidently not the case with Claire, whose fluctuating color, trembling pace, and downcast eyes, indicated excessive emotion. The streets and windows were crowded with spectators, and, after the boys, who closed the procession in the same order as the girls, came a multitude of people of all descriptions, who thronged to the cathedral, to witness the ceremony.

Mademoiselle Laval now led forward her little train, for whom accommodation had been provided in the organ-gallery. As they entered through a side-door, to reach this place, they saw the communicants moving slowly up the central aisle, towards the high altar. An unusual bustle was at that moment observable among them, and they suddenly stopped. Every eye was directed to one spot, and a little girl was seen, leaning, pale, and breathless, against her companion. It was Claire, whose agitation was so great that she was sinking under the weight of her taper. A venerable priest approached her, and spoke in a low and encouraging tone. The fainting child was at length relieved by a gush of tears; and the priest, having given her taper to another, supported her gently towards the altar.

"That is Monsieur de Beauvais, Rose's confessor," observed Anna Lushington, in a whisper to Emily. "He is a dear, kind old man, and seems to feel for those children the affection of a father."

The young ladies now ascended to the organ-gallery, and placed themselves so as to command an advantageous view of the high altar. The communicants were still slowly approaching it; their soft hallelujahs were almost drowned in the majestic peals of the organ. At length, after some bustle, they were all seated at a little distance from the altar. Looking down the body of the

church, Emily observed Caroline and Emma Selwyn, with the Dorville family. They also saw her, but, whether from this, or any other circumstance, it was impossible to say, the whole party immediately removed to another situation, in which she could not see them.

The pompous and splendid solemnities of the high mass now commenced. To most of the English girls they had lost the charm of novelty, but not their hold on the senses and the imagination. At the conclusion, the organ began a strain of the most captivating sweetness, blended with a thrilling solemnity. The attention of the congregation was now intensely fixed on the youthful communicants, while the final preparations were going forward. Emily's eyes immediately sought Claire, and she observed her rise, and walk, with faltering steps, to Monsieur de Beauvais. She knelt at his feet, and, as his head was bent over her, she whispered something in his ear. The old man spoke a few words, apparently in reply, then, placing his hand kindly on her head, led her back to her place.

"She has been confessing," observed Miss Lushington, whose good-nature led her to be Emily's constant informant. "It is a point of conscience with them to confess, before they approach the altar, any sin they may have forgotten in their last confession, or committed since."

The appointed priests were now standing round the altar, with Monsieur de Beauvais, as *grand curé* of the town, at their head. The children, formed into several divisions, were successively ranged around it, and, on their knees, awaited their own participation in the ceremony. Two priests held a long white linen cloth before them; one was placed behind them, to hold back their heads; a third, with a silver spoon, of a very peculiar construction, placed on their tongues the consecrated wafer, which they were to swallow immediately; and a fourth held a small plate of the same metal under their chins, lest the host should, by any accident, fall to the ground. The whole of this scene presented a subject of merriment to most of the English girls, in which they would doubtless have indulged, had they not been restrained by the presence of the French teacher; but, to Emily, its ludicrous appearance did not disguise the reality of its superstitious character. Every feeling, however, was soon absorbed in the enchantment of the music; the full and rich tones of the organ were exquisitely blended with the melting voices of the finest singers in the town, and the melody was altogether so entrancing, that it seemed to raise the ravished soul above mortality and all its cares. Emily and Lydia felt its fascinating power in no common degree; and, as the service concluded, and they descended from the gallery, the latter repeated, while her eyes sparkled through her tears, those beautiful lines of the poet,—

Now loud the tuneful thunders roll,
And rouse and elevate the soul
O'er earth and all its care;
I seem to hear, from heavenly plains,
Angelic choirs' responsive strains,
And in their raptures share.

Before the procession left the cathedral, all the children's tapers were lighted at the altar. Our young ladies then returned home and awaited its re-appearance at the front gate. It is impossible to conceive anything more imposing, and, at the same time, more affecting, than the sight of these lovely children, in their uniform white drapery. The solemnity and stillness of their tread, and the flickering glare of their tapers, gave to the whole scene an air of dreamy uncertainty that almost bewildered the senses; the deep voices of the priests, and the sweet touching harmony of the children, as they uttered the frequent and prolonged hallelujahs, seemed to make Emily's heart pause; but when the mournful truth rushed on her mind, that all these interesting beings were but the deluded votaries of superstition, the revulsion of oppressed feeling overcame her, and a burst of tears came to her relief.

"What is the matter, Emily?" inquired Anna, with a look and tone of alarm. "Are you ill?"

"Oh! nothing, nothing, dear Anna. I am very well; but, tell me, do you not find this scene very affecting?"

"Oh, is that all?" exclaimed Miss Lushington, with a shrug, and a smile of good-natured raillery. "Why, yes, I found it very pathetic at first, but now it appears to me superlatively ridiculous."

Emily made no further observations, for she perceived that Anna's feelings on the subject had never been in unison with her own; and the whole party returned to the house, to discourse on the events of the morning. Emily retired to her room, to pray that God in Christ Jesus would reveal himself to the dear children she had just beheld, and that he would graciously preserve all those who were dear to her, from the delusions that surrounded them.

Lydia and Helen now entered, to inform her that the school was assembled in the garden, awaiting the summons to breakfast, and that the communicants were returning from the Hospital church, whither they had gone to deposit their tapers, and receive the final benediction. The friends, therefore, descended, and, just as they joined the group, Emily observed little Claire approaching. Rose, whose pale countenance still retained the traces of tears and emotion, flew to meet her, and the sweet child flung herself into her sister's arms, and sobbed on her bosom. Madame d'Elfort at that moment appeared, and, with gentle violence, parting the sisters, spoke a few kind words, of mingled reproof and encouragement, to each; and then drew Claire towards the other

young ladies. The child embraced her school-fellows, and then approached the small arbor where Emily was sitting. She led by the hand two little girls from the charity-school, her companions at the communion, it being the custom for every young lady to choose one or two poor children on that occasion, and bring them home to share in the festivities of the day. Emily pressed Claire to her heart, with inexpressible emotion, and, as she kissed her dimpled cheek, from which the bloom of health had been displaced by the tears and agitation of that morning, the sweet child twined her arms round her friend's neck, and whispered, "You must not be angry with me, for my rudeness in not speaking to you this morning; we were commanded to observe the strictest reserve, and especially not to speak to.... to..... the Protestants," she at last articulated, as the effort to suppress the word "*heretics*," used by her instructors, covered her face with the crimson of embarrassment. She sought to hide her confusion, by turning to her humble companions, and Emily, unable to make any other answer, again kissed her affectionately, and, with a sigh, walked towards the house.

The bell now summoned the whole party to the *salle à manger*, where a plentiful and elegant breakfast was prepared. The communicants were placed along the upper part of the table, and each young lady had her *protégées* by her side. Every possible honor was paid to the heroines of the day, and every mark of distinction heaped upon them; they were the queens of the feast, or rather the idols of the moment, considered as sanctified by the sacrament of which they had partaken, and looked up to with superstitious veneration. At dinner, the same honors were bestowed upon them, and in the afternoon they paraded, with their humble companions, through the town, paying visits to their different friends and connexions, and receiving, at every house, the same incense of adulation, the same flattering marks of distinction and regard. As it was intended that this day should be the happiest of their life, nothing that could enhance their pleasure, or satisfy their utmost wishes, was denied them; and the proud triumph of gratified vanity, that sparkled in every eye, and flushed every youthful cheek, bore sufficient testimony to the baneful effects of this practice.

On the following Sunday, the communicants again went to mass in procession, accompanied by their *protégées*, who once more dined with the family, and then were dismissed with a handsome present. This was the last day of greatness to the objects of the festival; after having been almost deified through the week, they now fell back into their original obscurity.

CHAPTER XVI.

SCHOOL PERSECUTION.

But, as then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.—GAL. iv. 29.

THE employments of the school resumed their usual settled and peaceful order, and Emily occasionally enjoyed the pleasure of a little conversation with Rose, but was inexpressibly grieved to find that the shade of sorrow, which she had so often observed before on her countenance, had now deepened into a gloom which overspread her character, and gave a tinge of melancholy sadness to all her actions. Her attention to religious observances seemed doubly fervent, and the almost austere expression which overshadowed her fair, open brow, every day gave opportunity for satire to her gay and irreligious companions. The taunting appellation of Saint Rose was that by which she was now commonly addressed, by most of the French, and sometimes by many of the English girls. The patient meekness with which she strove to bear these malicious sarcasms, only seemed to give confidence to her youthful tormentors, and the poor girl evidently suffered many a painful conflict, in maintaining the dominion over feelings naturally acute, and even somewhat irritable.

It was the custom of the house, that the Roman Catholics should attend early mass every morning, confess every month, and occasionally spend some hours in the church, for the purpose of retirement and public devotion. They were always attended by one of the teachers, or by Madame d'Elfort herself. On one of these occasions, they had remained somewhat longer than usual, and, as breakfast had been delayed on their account, a group of anxious inquirers surrounded them on their return, to ask the cause of their having been thus detained. Mademoiselle Laval, who had escorted the party, immediately explained it, much to their amusement.

"We were coming away more than a quarter of an hour ago," said she, "had not Rose de Liancourt prevented us. She had been the last at her devotions, and we had been obliged to summon her away from the Virgin's chapel; but, just as we reached the Cathedral door, she accosted me with one of her imploring looks. 'Oh, mademoiselle, do pray allow me to return, for one instant, to the altar!—I have totally forgotten a very important petition, which I wished to present to God.' I could not resist the little simpleton's entreaty, but we all wished her prayers somewhat shorter, for she is, really, very tiresome, though her *naïveté* is so infinitely amusing."

A general burst of laughter, from her giddy auditors, followed

this speech of the good-natured but thoughtless teacher; and many were the arch glances, and satirical remarks, of which poor Rose was the object, both from the Protestants and Roman Catholics. Madame d'Elfort, indeed, knew nothing of all this. Her veneration for the ordinances of her church, and her high sense of external religion, would have led her to bestow unqualified praise on the earnest and absorbing devotion of her pupil, and to censure severely those who made a jest of what they ought to have imitated; but much of what passes in a large establishment must inevitably remain unknown to the person who presides over it.

She did not ask any question respecting the unusual delay that had occurred, though it necessarily occasioned a great deal of bustle, as the day happened to be one of those set apart every month, for the examination of the pupils. They were required, on that day, to write down from memory the substance of all they had learnt from history during the preceding month, and the same system was pursued with regard to geography, and most of their other studies. These exercises occupied the whole school-time, and in the evening, several pupils who had not finished, were allowed to remain in the school-room, under the care of a teacher, in order that they might complete their task. Among these last were Emily and Rose. The former, whose anxiety to do justice to her subject had prolonged her labors, but whose quickness of memory and capacity enabled her to get through them without much difficulty, had leisure occasionally to look around her, and to observe the intense attention which the latter bestowed on her work. She had a long analysis to write, of a particularly difficult portion of history; and the deep thoughtfulness, and often distressing expression of her countenance, denoted that her recollections were sometimes perplexed. So entirely was she absorbed in her employment, that she heeded nothing of what was passing around her; but her mild eyes were often raised to heaven, as if supplicating assistance from thence, and she crossed herself with fervor, and uttered a silent ejaculation. Two or three of her school-fellows, who sat opposite to her, had for some time watched her, with looks of satirical observation. At length, Clémentine Vermont exclaimed, in a tone expressive of *pique*, as well as ridicule, "Upon my word, Mademoiselle de Liancourt, your devotion is quite edifying; but I should feel obliged by your behaving a little more like other people, and not disturbing us in our studies, by your ostentatious use of the sign of the cross, when there is no necessity at all for such a display."

Rose started from her deep musing, and fixed her eyes on the face of the speaker. "No necessity, Clémentine!—I know not how far that assertion may be correct in *your* case, but I assure you that in *mine* it is a great mistake. I find my own unassisted powers so entirely inadequate to the right performance of my

duties, both great and small, but I am thankful I have the privilege of seeking help from on high. Why, then, should you call that ostentation, which our church commands us to use on every occasion of difficulty, or of need, whether it arise from the greater, or more minute occurrences of life?"

"That is truly said," observed Mademoiselle Laval, whose religious feelings, and natural candor, were thus called forth, by Rose's appeal to the church. "We ought, indeed, to ask the Holy Virgin's help in every time of need, and the church teaches that the sign of the cross is a most effectual remedy against all perplexities. Rose is therefore much to be praised, for using it to assist her memory; and you, Clémentine, ought to imitate, rather than find fault with her."

Clémentine tossed her head in disdain, and muttered some ill-natured remark, about "pretended saints," and "hypocrites."

Poor Rose was far from enjoying the satisfaction, which the teacher's rebuke to Clémentine, and approbation of her own conduct, might have seemed calculated to give her. She had been accused of ostentation and hypocrisy—a subject on which she was peculiarly vulnerable. She bent down her head, in sorrowful dejection, and her tears dropped on her writing. She hastily finished her exercise, and, delivering it to Mademoiselle Laval, hurried out of the school-room.

In passing through the *salle à manger*, she encountered Mademoiselle St. André, who, observing her flushed cheek and swollen eyes, tauntingly inquired "what was the matter with Saint Rose?" This obnoxious appellation, so often deprecated, and so unfeelingly persisted in, roused the indignation of its object to the highest pitch; and a very warm altercation ensued, in which both teacher and scholar forgot their relative situations. In the midst of passionate remonstrances on the one hand, and provoking reproaches on the other, Emily entered from the school-room, and, making an apology to Mademoiselle St. André, drew away Rose to her own apartment. Here the poor girl gave way to the violence of her over-wrought feelings, in a paroxysm of tears and sobs. Emily embraced, and gently strove to soothe her; but in this she could not succeed, till the agony of her mind, having exhausted herself, gave place to the paleness and langour of dejection. Seeing her, at length, restored to some degree of composure, Emily seized the opportunity of representing to her, how much she had transgressed against her duty, both as a scholar and a Christian; in allowing her passions thus to obtain the mastery over her principles, and affectionately urged the necessity of her making a proper submission to Mademoiselle St. André.

Rose immediately acknowledged her fault, and consented to make the utmost reparation in her power; she sought not to palliate her misconduct, but, after having recourse to her usual invo-

cation—the sign of the cross—went in search of the offended teacher, and humbly requested her forgiveness.

The same evening, after supper, the whole school were allowed to walk in the garden, and amuse themselves in whatever way was most congenial to their inclinations. The scene was rich in moonlight beauty, and the air of soft repose that pervaded every object, joined to the lavish perfumes of spring, and the tender melody of the nightingale, seemed to shed a kind of enchantment over the whole landscape. Some of the young ladies retired to the different *bosquets* scattered through the garden, to enjoy the society and conversation of their friends; but they were recalled by Madame d'Elfort, who insisted that they should either dance or walk, in order to prevent their taking cold. The greater number, therefore, engaged in an animated and noisy *ronde*, in the open central space, which was surrounded, and almost over-arched, by the thick foliage of clustering limes. A few, however, preferred the quiet enjoyment of a ramble, and among this number were Emily and Rose, who, having sought each other out, struck into the most retired walk, and gladly left behind the merriment of the giddy group.

"I have made my humble apology to Mademoiselle St. André," said Rose, as, leaning on the arm of Emily, she entered a narrow embowered path, fragrant with roses and *mignonette*, "and now let me entreat your pardon, my dearest, best friend, for the trouble and vexation I have given you by my violence. Oh! if you knew what conflicts, what misery I often endured, from my unsubdued feelings, you would indeed pity me! But you cannot form an adequate idea of my difficulties, for your own disposition is so gentle, so calm, that you can seldom be in danger of losing the equanimity of so well regulated a mind."

"Alas! my dear Rose, you greatly mistake the matter. Few persons, I think, have stronger passions than myself, or more need of watchfulness, to keep them within the bounds of Christian obedience. But the grace of God is all-sufficient, and if we implore the mighty influences of his Holy Spirit, we shall find 'his strength made perfect in our weakness.'"

"I bless God that it is so," replied Rose, devoutly crossing herself,—“O yes! I can bear testimony to the truth of your observation. I am a poor, weak, helpless creature, and should be continually falling into sin, did not the blessed Virgin assist me; but, alas! I am sadly deficient in watchfulness over my own heart. Accept my most fervent gratitude, for your kind interference this morning, and, if it is not presuming too much on your friendship, allow me to entreat, dearest Miss Mortimer, that you will still take the trouble to watch over and reprove me. I shall also beg of my confessor to enjoin me a very severe penance for this day's fault."

"I wish, Rose, you would look *more simply* to God," said Emily.

with a deep sigh of vexation, at the singular mixture of truth and error in her friend's ideas; but, instantly remembering the dangerous ground she was treading on, she checked herself, and inquired what circumstance it was, which had so painfully ruffled her temper in the morning.

"The old subject of contention, that distressing appellation which my tormentors know so well I cannot endure. I am fully aware, indeed, that it is only bestowed upon me in scorn; yet I feel that its application to such a creature as myself is both shocking and profane; and the idea of that name, and the sacred cause of religion, being thus dishonored by my faults, is what pierces my heart with the most insufferable anguish."

"I feel very sincerely for your distress, dearest Rose; but, if we would be Christians, we must expect to be reviled, even as our adorable Saviour was; and He has pronounced those 'blessed,' who are thus persecuted for his sake."

"Oh yes! but I am not worthy of such an honor," exclaimed Rose, clasping her hands, and raising her meek and tearful eyes to heaven. "Oh! if you knew me, Emily! if you did but know what a sinful creature I am, you would feel as much shocked at the profanation as I do! Let them call me hypocrite, or any other vile name, as often as they please,—let them abase my self-love, or wound my feelings, and I shall strive to bear it patiently, as a salutary penance: but never, oh! never let them dishonor the sacred name of *saint*, by coupling it with mine!"

They had now reached a small secluded seat, at the end of the walk, and the beauty and tranquillity of the scene tempted Emily to sit down. Rose leant against the hedge of rose bushes, and sobbed with irrepressible emotion. Emily pressed her hand, but, though her tears dropped on it, in silent sympathy, her heart was too full for utterance. The youthful mourner at length threw herself into her arms, and it was long ere she could regain her wonted calmness.

"You are the only person in this house," said she at length, "who seems to understand my feelings, and I thank the blessed Virgin every day, for having given me such a friend; and yet, because you are not a Catholic, I have been compelled to maintain the most unpleasant reserve towards you. But I will do so no longer; I will confide my sorrows to your kind and compassionate bosom, and entreat from you that counsel and assistance which I so often need. Your faithful admonitions have this day confirmed my dependence on your friendship, and I will converse freely with you, on every subject but the forbidden one of religion. Would that I could throw away all reserve on *that* also!"

Emily had not sought this confidence from her friend; yet she certainly felt desirous of knowing more of her situation. It was evidently a painful one, and a nobler feeling than curiosity induced

her to hope that she might be the means of administering comfort, at least, if not advice or assistance. It was, therefore, with no common interest, that she listened to Rose's narrative.

"You are no doubt aware, my dearest Emily, from the gossip of the school, that my poor father's conduct has caused his family much grief and trouble. He is a man of strong feelings, and dreadfully violent passions; but he certainly was, during my childhood, a kind husband, and a most affectionate father. Indeed, he is still very fond of his children; but, alas! his character and conduct are sadly altered. He commanded a large frigate during the late war; it was taken by your countrymen, and my father, after being dangerously wounded in the engagement, was carried to London, where he remained several years. There he met with much kindness and honorable treatment, but, unhappily, fell into company of a very wicked and dissolute kind,—principally, I am ashamed to say, among the French officers who were, like himself, prisoners of war. There my poor father entered into all those pursuits, which have since proved his own misery, and the ruin of his family."

Here Rose paused for a moment, and gave way to tears of bitter recollection. Emily entreated her to spare herself any further communication, on a subject which caused her so much painful emotion, and reminded her that Madame d'Elfort had forbidden them to sit down. She immediately rose, and they resumed their walk; but she would not suspend a narration which she had long been anxious to enter upon.

"My dear mother heard from him occasionally, during his captivity, and, as his fortune was not large, she cheerfully sacrificed her own, to answer his repeated and enormous demands for money. She could not, however, resist the painful conviction, that he must have plunged very deeply into the fatal vice of gaming, and she languished for his return, in the hope that the claims of duty, and the voice of affection, could not fail to recall him to the path of rectitude and peace. I was very young then, but well do I remember my beloved mother's anxiety, her tears, her constant prayers, her impassioned longing for peace; and though I could not then share her confidence, my heart already sympathized deeply in her uneasiness. At last the long desired, long prayed for moment, arrived; the ravages of war ceased, and peace extended her olive branch over the nations of Europe. After another interval of heart-sickening suspense, a large remittance enabled my father to leave England, and my dear mother had at last the unspeakable happiness of throwing herself on the bosom of her long lost husband.

"But, oh! what a sad, what a fearful change did she soon perceive in him! After the first emotions of pleasure, on returning to his country and friends, had subsided, my father no longer appeared

to take any interest in the enjoyments of home, the society of his wife, or the education of his children. His hours were chiefly spent in the most dissipated and dangerous company, and, when he returned, the irritation caused by his losses at play, rendered his naturally kind disposition harsh and gloomy. My mother wept in secret, at this final blighting of her happiness, while she forced her countenance to wear, before him, the smile of unaltered cheerfulness and affection. But her health, naturally delicate, and long undermined by anxiety, gradually sunk under these redoubled trials; she pined in silent anguish, and drooped like a lily broken by the tempest.

"It was then that her kind confessor, the excellent *curé* of this town, considered it his duty to remonstrate with my father. He had anxiously observed his conduct, and knew more, far more of his pursuits, than we did. He took the first opportunity of reasoning mildly with him, and seriously representing the injury he was doing, both to himself and his family. My father was affected, and, to deepen the impression made on his heart, Monsieur de Beauvais pressed on his attention the most solemn and important truths of religion. Alas! he then discovered, what before he had only feared—that infidelity had taken the most fatal possession of his mind, and thus sapped the foundation of every moral principle. Shocked at this discovery, he confided it to my uncle de Longueville, my mother's only brother, and entreated his assistance in reclaiming the wanderer. But in vain did they use every method that affection could suggest; my poor father spurned the counsel of the venerable minister, and called it the insolent meddling of priest-craft; while he so highly resented the interference of my uncle, that a quarrel ensued between them, and ended in a duel, which had nearly proved fatal to them both.

"This was the death-blow to my dear suffering mother's intellects. The terror and anguish she experienced, on that dreadful occasion, were too much both for body and mind. A brain fever, of the most alarming kind, made us despair of her life; and, when health again dawned on the body, reason had forsaken her throne, for ever!"

Here Rose pressed her hand on her heart, as if to repress a strong feeling of anguish; but, unmindful of Emily's entreaties, she persisted in finishing the narrative.

"I need not tell you, my dear friend, that the gloom of sorrow has rested on my mind ever since. My father, indeed, displayed much tenderness and remorse for a few weeks, and nothing could exceed the attention and care he bestowed on his broken-hearted wife, while procuring for her every little comfort or enjoyment which her melancholy-situation was capable of. But the salutary impression soon faded from his mind; and, while her mourning family were anxiously watching the steps, looks, and actions of

the interesting sufferer, in the faint, but fondly cherished hope, that some heavenly ray would still burst through the gloom of mental aberration, the woman who had been hired to attend upon her, and whose pleasing manners had very much prepossessed us in her favor, contrived so completely to engage my father's affections, as to obtain the most unbounded ascendancy over him. This was soon perceived, by her becoming the despot of the family. All our old servants left the house, and their places were immediately filled by others of her own choosing. It was in vain to remonstrate with my father, for her influence over him was every day increased, by her ostentatious kindness to my mother, and the apparent interest she took in the welfare of my sister and myself. I need not tell you that I was wretched, and that my only solace lay in attending to my suffering parent, and in feebly endeavoring to supply her place to my poor little sister.

'I know not if Madame Gérard was fearful that the feelings of parental affection, which my father still manifested for us, might at length prove inimical to her interest; but she persuaded him, four years ago, to send me to school. I left home with the most poignant anguish, for I dreaded that cruel treatment would in private be inflicted on my mother; but I durst not remonstrate, though my heart was ready to burst. I, however, obtained leave to visit her every week, and my fears were at length somewhat allayed, by observing that Madame Gérard's conduct to the dear invalid remained, to all appearance, unchanged. Indeed, she must have been a monster of inhumanity, if she could have treated her harshly; for the poor sufferer is as gentle as a lamb, and as passively obedient as an infant. She seems to have an instinctive dread of her guardian; but, though I questioned Claire closely and frequently, I could never discover that she had been otherwise than kindly treated.

"My mother's friends, however, as well as myself, foresaw the most baneful consequences to my sister, from her remaining under such tuition, and subject to such an example; and, after many ineffectual attempts, nor united entreaties at length prevailed on my father to send her to Madame d'Elfort. She has now been here about two years, and, although she had already contracted many bad habits, and was totally uncultivated, I thank God that she now bids fair to realize the fondest wishes of my heart."

"Has your mother ever any lucid intervals?" inquired Emily, whose silent tears had testified her sympathy, more powerfully than words could have done. "Does she know you, and the other members of her family?"

"Oh! yes, very frequently;—and there are moments, when I could almost fancy her reason is returning; but, alas! some flash of painful recollection then darts across her mind, and all is dark and wild again. She is never otherwise than gentle; but her

deep and silent melancholy is truly heart-rending. Oh! I could weep, till my life departed, when she presses my hand to her heart, and, with an agonizing sigh, tells me "her pain is *there*." Another burst of sorrow closed the painful narrative of this affectionate daughter; and, before she could recover the composure of her usual manner, the bell summoned the whole school to pray-ers in the open part of the garden.

"We must go!" exclaimed Rose, stifling her emotion with a determined effort, and grasping the arm of Emily. "I know not when we shall enjoy another such interview; but I have still much to tell you, and stand greatly in need of your advice. I shall seize the first opportunity that presents itself, if you will kindly listen to me again. In the mean time, you will pray for me;—will you not?"

A silent, but expressive, pressure of the hand was Emily's only answer; for, though they hurried towards the circle, they scarcely reached it before the prayers were begun. The numerous groups of young ladies, kneeling round their majestic governess, and seen by the soft radiance of moonlight, presented a most interesting spectacle; and, as Emily also bent her knees, under the shade of a few straggling branches, she closed her ears to the words that were uttered, lest their import should destroy the sweet illusion of the scene, or prevent her thoughts from soaring to "the one Mediator between God and man."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE HIDDEN SNARE.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.—MATT. vii. 15.

LYDIA HOWARD had occasionally been invited to accompany her sister, in her visits to the Dorville family. She had done so once, during the senseless gaieties of the Carnival; but, although her hosts were among the strictest observers of religious decorum, and looked with horror on masquerades, and every *assemblée* that bore the name of *ball*, she saw enough of dissipation, in their private *réunions*, and *petites soirées*, to awaken distaste in a mind which, though it had not yet submitted to the sanctifying influence of the

gospel, had, nevertheless, acquired that elevated tone of sentiment and feeling, which cannot stoop to the grovelling pleasures of the world. Caroline had expressed herself equally dissatisfied with these enjoyments, and the two sisters had, therefore, declined another invitation to partake of the festivities of Easter, when the poor deluded devotees, rejoicing to be at length freed from the six weeks' thralldom of Lent austerities, gave a loose to the unbounded effusions of their joy, and entered with fresh avidity into the follies they had so reluctantly suspended.

The sisters were now, however, entreated to join the family, during a visit to Monsieur Dorville's country-seat. Madame d'Elfort was to be of the party, and both Caroline and Lydia gladly accepted an invitation which promised to afford them much real and innocent pleasure.

On their arrival at the mansion, which was situated a few leagues from the town, they were much delighted with its beautiful gardens, and the rural scenery that surrounded it. The only person of the party whom Lydia had never seen before, was the Abbé de Ronceval, a priest, who was Eugène Dorville's tutor, at the public seminary he attended. This gentleman was still young, extremely well-bred, and had so little of the priest in his manners and conversation, as to make himself perfectly agreeable to all parties. The first few days of the visit passed pleasantly away; but when their stay was prolonged beyond the Sabbath, Lydia could not help deeply regretting this privation of the public means of grace. She thought herself obliged by politeness to accompany the family to high mass, especially as her sister too was of the same opinion. But she felt as if she were not doing quite right, and returned to the house quite discontented with herself. In the afternoon, as the church was at some distance, the family did not go to vespers, but assembled in the drawing-room, to repeat a *chapelet*. Lydia was resolved to go no farther in compliance, and having seen her sister leave the room some time before, she rose to join her in their own chamber, whither she supposed her to have retired. Caroline was not there, but not doubting that she should find her in the gardens, she immediately went in search of her, taking in her hand "Hervey's Meditations," a work which she always read with increased admiration and delight. The gardens were now clothed in all the blooming loveliness of spring, and Lydia, with the glowing enthusiasm of a lover of nature, went in ecstasy from one sweet spot to another, and bent fondly over every beauteous object in her path, till she found herself in a romantic recess, in the centre of which gushed a crystal fountain, its sparkling waters reflecting the bright green foliage of the trees that shaded its surface, while the marble statue of a water-nymph was bending over its transparent bosom. This was a spot peculiarly fitted for contemplation; and, as it command-

ed a view of a blooming wilderness of flowers, Lydia sat down on a moss-covered seat, and began to peruse Hervey's observations on those beauteous objects.

She had remained some time in this pleasing occupation, when she was startled by the sound of footsteps, and, looking up, perceived the abbé before her. He had a book under his arm, and either was, or pretended to be, surprised at finding her there.

"I beg pardon, mademoiselle, for this intrusion," said he, politely; "I fear I have disturbed you. Pray resume your seat," added he, observing that Lydia was turning to leave the spot.

"Excuse me, sir," she replied, "I had not intended to remain here; but, beguiled by the beauty of the scene, and the contents of a favorite book, I have allowed the time to pass away unobserved."

"This is indeed a lovely retreat," remarked the abbé, "and peculiarly favorable both to study and devotion. But, mademoiselle, will you allow me to ask, why you were not present this afternoon, at the repetition of the *chapelet*?"

"I, sir!" exclaimed Lydia, with unaffected astonishment; "Did you expect to see me there? You must surely be aware that I am not a Roman Catholic."

"Not a Catholic! Impossible! but you are a Frenchwoman, Mademoiselle!"

"No, sir, I am not; and I feel truly surprised that my name alone has not informed you of my origin, even if my language and manners did not."

Lydia uttered this with a tone of mortified pride, for there were few things she disliked more, than the idea of bearing any resemblance to the French.

"Pardon me, Mademoiselle, I have perhaps been wilfully blind; but the wonderful fluency and correctness with which you speak our language, and the purity and elegance of your accent, prevented my suspecting that you were other than a native of France. Your attendance at mass, too, and the sincere devotion so visible in your manner, would have led any one to believe——"

"Then, sir, you were strangely mistaken," interrupted Lydia, who was not at all satisfied with her own conduct in this very particular, and justly feared that all this flattery was intended to lead to some attack on her principles. She took up her book, and was preparing to leave the grot, when the abbé, gently detaining her, inquired, with an air of the most friendly interest,

"And is it possible, Mademoiselle, that you will deliberately remain in the errors of Protestantism, when you are living in the land of true Christianity, and surrounded by faithful Christians?"

"Yes, sir," replied Lydia firmly; for she was resolved, since she could not avoid the contest, to defend her religion with undaunted courage; "I will most willingly remain in those errors, as you unjustly call them."

"I believe," observed the priest, after a moment's pause, "that you do not even pray to the holy Virgin, or request the intercession of the saints."

"No, sir, nor does the Word of God authorize us so to do."

"The Bible!" exclaimed the abbé, raising his hands, with a peculiar expression of countenance, as if greatly shocked by her observation,—*"Oh, Mademoiselle! you too, then, are in the habit of reading that book!"*

Lydia felt confused by his manner, but replied, notwithstanding, with unshrinking firmness—

"Most assuredly, sir, I read it daily."

"But, my dear child, since you study the Bible, you must be aware, that the angel Gabriel said to the mother of God—*'Thou art blessed among women,'*—and that this appellation clearly authorizes the reverence that is paid to her by the holy church. What reasonable objection can you make to this?"

Lydia paused a moment at this question, and could not forbear trembling, at the idea of her incompetency to answer so powerful an opponent. She silently lifted up her heart in prayer, for divine assistance; then, suddenly recollecting what she had once read on the same subject, replied with animation,

"I shall only remind you, sir, that the very same title was twice applied to Jael, after she had destroyed Sisera; and yet your church, I believe, does not think it necessary to worship her."

The abbé started at this observation, and appeared somewhat disconcerted. Lydia unconsciously opened her book; but resolving not to remain altogether on the defensive, she again looked up, and inquired,—

"Pray, sir, of what use is confessing to a priest, as the Roman Catholics do?"

"Confession, my dear young lady, is one of those points on which the holy church most strongly insists. It teaches us to humble ourselves, and, in a great measure, prevents the commission of sin."

"Indeed, sir!" observed Lydia, somewhat archly,—*"I could never have supposed so."*

The abbé was thoughtful for a few minutes, then inquired, with an air of great earnestness,

"If, Mademoiselle, you were assured that our religion was the only true one, would you forsake yours to embrace it?"

"I hope I should, sir."

"Strange!... then why do you *not* return to the true faith?"

"Because, sir, I am far from being convinced that yours is such."

"But if you *were* so," artfully rejoined the priest, "it would be difficult for you to throw off the shackles that surround you. Your parents are Protestants, and would no doubt be highly displeased should you manifest any desire to do so."

"Perhaps they would, sir; but I hope that not even their disap-

probation would prevent me from doing whatever conscience might dictate. However, I feel not the least inclination to make the trial."

"Perhaps," observed the abbé, as if musing, and without appearing to notice her last expression, "perhaps your governess would allow you to go privately to confession; you might abstain from eating meat on fast-days; your parents would know nothing of it; and when you return home, you might still occasionally attend the Catholic service; till, at the end of your minority, you were enabled openly to profess your sentiments."

He seemed waiting for an answer to this insidious speech; but Lydia's mind was too much agitated by conflicting feelings, to allow of her making one. Indignation against the priest, for the perfidious advantage he had thus endeavored to take of her youth and inexperience; shame and vexation, at being thus wilfully misunderstood, and contempt for the disingenuous mode of proceeding he recommended; all strove for pre-eminence in the reply she was meditating, when a step approached the grotto, and Caroline appeared seeking her sister. She started, on seeing Monsieur de Ronceval; but Lydia again raised her averted eyes to his countenance; and, while the flush of resentment on her cheek plainly indicated what was passing in her mind, she took the arm of her sister and coldly bowing to him, silently took the path towards the house.

Arrived in their own chamber, she imparted to Caroline the substance of the conversation in the grotto, and openly avowed her resolution of relating the whole to Madame d'Elfort.

"I am certain," exclaimed she, with her usual warmth, "that she would not approve of this mean attempt to subvert the principles of one entrusted to her care."

Caroline had listened to the recital with deep attention, and without making a single comment; but she now advised her sister to forego the intention she had expressed. "It would be foolish," she observed, "to make a stir about it. Monsieur de Ronceval, no doubt, has acted from the best motives; though he was greatly mistaken in his opinion of you. Do not, my dear Lydia, trouble Madame d'Elfort about such a trifle."

Lydia did not feel quite satisfied with her sister's advice; but she at length brought herself to believe that, as Caroline's judgment was superior to hers, it was her duty to yield to her opinion.

They now descended, to join the family in the *salon*. On passing Madame Dorville's room, the door of which was partly open, Lydia heard the voice of Monsieur de Ronceval, pronouncing her name. She stopped, almost involuntarily, and heard Madame Dorville ask,

"And what answer did she make to this kind proposal of yours?"

"We were interrupted," replied the priest, "before I could ascertain her sentiments; but I think she is well-disposed towards the truth, though the fear of her family restrains her."

"We must try again," observed Madame Dorville; and she was proceeding to make some further remarks on the subject, when Lydia recollected herself, and, ashamed of having been, though almost unintentionally, listening to a private conversation, glided swiftly down the spacious staircase, and soon found herself in the garden.

"It is, then, a concerted plan!" exclaimed she, almost aloud, "and I am the object of this perfidious conspiracy! How can that wicked priest thus misrepresent the truth? But they shall find that I am not the foolish prey they seek. Oh! I wish I could return to S——, immediately! But, while I am compelled to remain here, I will avoid all private conversations, and, if they dare to attack me again, I will instantly complain to Madame d'Elfort."

Thus firmly resolved on the conduct she would pursue, and her heart swelling with indignant feelings, she returned to her own room; and, as the agitation of her mind had produced a violent headache, she availed herself of this circumstance, to go to bed immediately, and thus avoided, for that evening, returning to the *salon*.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SUNDAY TEMPTATIONS.

They have prepared a net for my steps. They have digged a pit before me.—
PSALM lvi. 6.

THE next morning brought Madame d'Elfort a letter, announcing that her sister, having been seized with sudden indisposition, was anxious for her return; and, with the promptitude of alarmed affection, she immediately prepared to leave the villa. She gave Caroline and Lydia permission to remain with the Dorvilles, the whole of the time for which they had been invited, and the former gladly availed herself of it, as they were contemplating an excursion to a much-admired spot at some distance; but the latter, terrified at the thought of remaining in the midst of danger, entreated so earnestly that she might be permitted to accompany

her governess, that Madame d'Elfort, attributing this anxiety to affection for Madame d'Arblay, with whom she knew Lydia to be a great favorite, kindly undertook to apologize for her hasty departure; and, after some remonstrances from the family, they left the country together.

Lydia felt truly thankful for this providential escape, and still more so, when she found that Madame d'Arblay's illness was not of a serious nature. She did not fail to impart every circumstance that had occurred to her cousin Emily, who commended her for the prudence she had shown, and approved of her determination, never more to expose herself to temptation, by any unnecessary intercourse with the Dorvilles.

Emily, however, did not communicate to Lydia all the painful and uneasy feelings which this narrative awakened in her own mind. She had, for some time, felt anxious on the subject of Caroline's great intimacy with the Dorvilles; but now, a host of vague and undefined apprehensions took possession of her mind. Fearful, however, of giving

to airy nothings
A local habitation, and a name.

she resolved to confine these thoughts to her own bosom, while, at the same time, she watched the course of passing events, and earnestly prayed that her fears might not be realized.

The following Sunday was a rainy day, and the English girls were deploring the necessity they were under, of remaining at school without enjoying the pleasure of going to chapel: a privilege which, from various motives, they all prized very highly; when little Agnes Beverley, with a look of great perplexity, approached Emily, and requested her advice. She had formed an intimacy with Aline de Saint-Pierre, a French boarder about her own age, and that young lady's mother had requested of Madame d'Elfort to allow her to spend that day with her daughter, at their *château*, a few leagues from town.

"I am sorry to go on a Sunday," continued Agnes, blushing, "but you know, Miss Mortimer, I cannot *refuse*, since Madame d'Elfort has consented; for it would be considered extremely rude to a family who have been very kind to me. Yet I wish I could get off from the engagement. Do tell me, dear Miss Mortimer, what I had better do; or, perhaps, you will be kind enough to try and persuade Madame d'Elfort to furnish me with some excuse for not going. I had hoped that, as the day was rainy, I should not be fetched; but Madame de Saint-Pierre's carriage is at the gate, and Aline is dressing, and will soon expect me. What shall I do?"

"And do you *really* wish *not* to go?" inquired Emily, fixing a penetrating glance on the embarrassed countenance of Agnes.

"Why, Miss Mortimer, I like to go to the *château*, but I remember having been told at home, that it was wrong to visit on Sundays; and then, you have said so much to us, about its being sinful to profane the Sabbath, that I don't know what to do."

"You ought, then, Agnes, to have told Madame d'Elfort before, of your unwillingness to go. However, I will speak to her immediately, and see what can be done."

With this intention, she descended, though her heart beat with violent emotion, at the boldness of the step she was taking. A sense of duty, however, nerved her courage, and, with a silent petition for success in this attempt to do good, she accosted Madame d'Elfort, as she was passing towards her own room, and requested a few moments' private conversation.

"Most willingly, my dear child," replied that lady, kindly putting her arm round Emily, and drawing her into the garden.

Emily timidly preferred her request, and represented the inconsistency of Protestant children's spending the Sabbath in a manner which totally precluded all attention to religious duties.

Madame d'Elfort's manner immediately changed, and a flush of displeasure overspread her countenance; she withdrew her arm from Emily's waist, and replied, with some asperity,—

"You are strangely particular, Mademoiselle Mortimer;—much more, I am sure, than your religion requires. Miss Beverley's engagement cannot be broken, without offending Madame de Saint-Pierre; and, besides, I do not like to let young people dictate."

Emily's courage failed beneath her frown, and, overcome by agitation, the tears started to her eyes.

Madame d'Elfort's anger was immediately softened; she embraced her pupil, and said, in a soothing voice,—

"Do not distress yourself, my little Emily; I cannot grant your request in this instance; but, rather than it shall cost you one single tear, I promise you that I will henceforth refuse all similar invitations for my English pupils. Now, are you satisfied with this proof of my affection?"

Emily warmly thanked her for her kindness, and then, returning to Agnes, requested her to take her Bible with her, and endeavor to seize a few moments in the day for perusing it.

The child departed, not without some feelings of self-accusation, which Emily hoped might prove salutary in their effects and the English boarders soon after retired to the school-room, to read the morning prayers and a sermon. Again they assembled in the afternoon, and read and conversed on the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Romans. This striking portion of Scripture called forth various questions and remarks, and Lydia, in particular, dwelt with anxious interest on the expression, "dead unto sin."

"How is it possible, Emily, that any one can become 'dead to sin' in this life? You say that the holiest Christians feel

to their latest moment, the power and burden of sin. How, then am I to understand this most perplexing declaration?"

"I am but a poor theologian, dearest Lydia, and, therefore, cannot pretend to resolve all your difficulties. But, observe the other passages of Scripture on the same subject, and perhaps you will find that they throw great light upon it. St. Paul explains it, in the sixth verse, by saying, that 'our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not *serve* sin';—in the 12th, that sin must not '*reign* in our mortal bodies, that we should *obey* it in the lusts thereof;'—and God promises, in the 14th, that, if we thus strive against sin, through the influence of his Holy Spirit, it 'shall not have dominion over us,' and in Micah, 7th chapter, 19th verse, that 'He will *subdue* our iniquities.'"

"Yet still I do not, *cannot* comprehend it: it is a perfect mystery to me."

"The *only* way, my love, to understand that mystery *savingly*, is to implore the promised teaching of the Holy Spirit; and *then* experience will make it plain to you."

"Well, I would give the world, if I had it, to know as much of it as you, and Louisa, and Caroline, do; but I fear it will never be any case."

The blush of self-accusation suffused the cheek of Louisa, at this allusion to herself; but Caroline turned pale with indefinable emotion. Emily only answered Lydia's observation with a sorrowful smile, accompanied by a look of tender reproof; and the youthful inquirer herself turned away, with a deep-drawn sigh, to avoid the piercing scrutiny of that glance.

The little afternoon-service was then concluded, by singing a hymn, and, the French boarders being now returned from vespers, the whole family were summoned to the garden. Caroline and Emily employed themselves in reading together, but had not long been so engaged, when Lydia ran hurriedly into the room.

"Caroline! Emily! do come down, I beseech you! The French and ourselves have had such a contest! They have tried to entice the little Bartons to buy fruit and cakes, and we have been using all our rhetoric to prevent them. We have got Lucy away from them at last, and Helen and Louisa are keeping guard over her; but Charlotte has fallen into the clutches of Miss St. André, and she, and that malicious Clémentine Vermont, are trying all their arts to make her forget her duty and her promises. We dare not approach her, for fear of exciting the teacher's anger; but you are persons of more consequence, and may rescue the poor child from temptation;—so do, pray, come, and foil the machinations of our enemies."

The two friends immediately descended, and were soon surrounded by the majority of the English. "Oh! do, dear Miss Mortimer," exclaimed several voices, "do disappoint Mademoi-

selle St. André and her coadjutors! They hope to obtain a triumph over our country and our religion, by tempting poor little Charlotte to abandon her principles, but we trust their machinations will redound to their shame."

Emily saw that the spirit of national religion was strongly aroused on this occasion; and, though the motives of many of these young champions of their country and faith were evidently defective, yet she remembered the time, when they were not only perfectly indifferent on that very subject, but generally conformed to the sinful practice they now reprobated; and she, therefore, felt thankful for the improvement which had thus taken place.

Charlotte and Lucy Barton were two little girls of nine and ten years old, whose tender age left them peculiarly exposed to the temptations that surrounded them. They had lately become a sort of rallying point, towards which the forces of both parties seemed to direct their utmost efforts. The French took advantage of the proud spirit, love of independence, and self-conceit of Charlotte, who was remarkably pretty, to flatter her vanity, and stimulate her to follow her own inclinations; while the excessive mildness, and quiet, yielding disposition of little Lucy, promised them an easy conquest.

Charlotte was standing by Mademoiselle St. André, who was speaking earnestly to her, when Emily approached. A flush of anger overspread the teacher's face, at this unwelcome intrusion, and the scornful curl of her lip was imitated by two or three of her favorites near her; but the presence of Emily acted like a spell on the half-yielding Charlotte. She looked ashamed and mortified, and did not move towards the fruit-woman's stall; and Mademoiselle St. André durst not continue her solicitations, as Madame d'Elfort had expressly commanded that the English should be left entirely to their own free choice, and had forbidden that any attempts should be made, either to persuade or entice them. Emily bowed respectfully to the teacher, and then seated herself under a tree opposite; Mademoiselle St. André continued talking, in an under-tone, to her companions, alternately regarding, with looks of suppressed rage, her undaunted opponent, and the shame-struck Charlotte, who had taken up a book, and was apparently engaged in learning a lesson. Thus the two champions remained for some time, attentively watching the object of their solicitude, till the teacher, observing that the fruit-woman was gone, and her attempts foiled for that day at least, cast on her rival a look of revengeful malice, and haughtily retired with her train of favorites.

They had hardly left the bower, when several English girls entered, leading in the docile Lucy, whom they had succeeded in keeping out of the way of temptation. They presented her as an example to her sister, and warmly asked the latter, "if she would disgrace her country and religion, by yielding to such

customs?" Charlotte was evidently vexed, and attempted to defend herself from the charge; but Emily approached, and put an end to the discussion.

"My dear friends," said she, mildly, "let Charlotte follow the dictates of her own conscience. No one has a right to control her in this respect, nor would a constrained obedience be acceptable to God. She knows what his Word says, about keeping the Sabbath holy, and I hope she will pray for grace, to enable her to walk in the path of duty. Only remember, my love," continued she, kissing the glowing cheek of Charlotte, "that the servant who knew his Lord's will, and did it not, was beaten with *many stripes*."

The little group then dispersed, and Emily returned to her quiet room.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.

If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.—2 Cor. vii. 12.

THE next Sabbath was a day of peculiar interest. When the Protestants assembled together, for afternoon service, they reminded Emily that it was the first Sunday in the month, when they were accustomed to have a missionary prayer, added to their simple form of worship. This beautiful and scriptural petition was accordingly read, and the greater number appeared to join in it with earnestness and sincerity. When the others had retired, Lydia complained of a headache, and expressed an anxious wish to spend the remainder of the afternoon with her cousin and sister. "Oh! if I could get away," exclaimed she, "from that stupid garden *recreation*, as it is called, how happy should I be, and how comfortably should I spend the time! especially as I have something to consult you about, which I consider to be of very great importance."

"I will go down," said Emily, "and try if I cannot obtain leave of absence for you."

"Oh, do! do! there's a dear, good creature! But stay! perhaps you had better not. That ill-natured Miss St. André will only take pleasure in refusing you, and, perhaps, get us a reprimand from Madame d'Elfort."

"I shall not ask Mademoiselle St. André," replied Emily, who was fully sensible of the ill-will that lady had repeatedly displayed towards her. "I shall seek Madame d'Elfort herself, and from her kindness I do not despair of obtaining my request."

"Oh, will you, indeed, dare to encounter her terrible ladyship? Then, dear Emily, be sure you make me some signal, as soon as you enter the house, if you have succeeded; for I shall be on thorns till I know the result."

Emily laughingly promised compliance, and departed, in search of Madame d'Elfort. She, however, could not find her, but meeting Madame d'Arblay, she preferred her request to that indulgent lady, and had the satisfaction of having it immediately complied with. She hastened back to her own room, joyfully clapping her hands, to apprise Lydia of her success.

"Now then," exclaimed the latter, throwing herself on a favorite seat of hers, near the window, "I shall be *quite at home*. But I must tell you of something that has engrossed my mind, the greater part of the day. We have prayed this afternoon for the heathen, and for all those who know not the gospel; and we every day ask of God, that 'his kingdom may come.' But is it not very much like hypocrisy, to use these prayers, while we take no pains to promote the cause we thus plead for?"

"I have often had the same thoughts, my dear Lydia, and often wished that something could be done here, in aid of the Missionary cause; but, alas! I feel that, situated as we are, it is quite impossible."

"It is true, we *are* in a land of darkness, and surrounded by everything that is hostile to true religion; yet, still, I think we might do a little, and if it were but *very little indeed*, I hope that He who condescended to accept the widow's mite, would not disdain our feeble offerings."

"No, my love, he certainly would not; what, then, would you propose to do?"

"I was thinking that, isolated as we are, we might form a little Missionary Society among ourselves, since there is none among the English in the town. If you will consent to my plan, we can speak to the other English girls. I think the greater number will join with us, in contributing a weekly trifle; and the ocean, you know, is supplied by a multitude of small streams. There is, at least, our own little party of friends, that we can depend upon; and there are besides, Elizabeth and Matilda Danvers, and Rose, Henrietta, and Matilda Maxwell, who, I am sure, will not refuse to contribute."

"But the French," observed Caroline, timidly, "how would they regard such a proceeding? and what would Madame d'Elfort say to it?"

"Oh, the horrid French!" exclaimed Lydia, in a tone of im-

patience,—“but they need know nothing about it; and, indeed, I think we have an undoubted right to dispose as we please of our pocket money, and that Madame d'Elfort has no authority over us, in matters that relate to religion.”

“It will be necessary, indeed,” replied Emily, “to be silent on the subject of our little plan; but let us beware, lest this caution betray us into duplicity, and thus convert a good intention into a snare, and an occasion of sin.”

“Well, at any rate, there can be no sin in contributing a trifle from our pocket money, to advance the cause of true Christianity in the world, even though our Roman Catholic teachers know nothing of the matter. We can make our little collection every Sunday afternoon, after prayers. Do, Emily, give me your sanction, and I shall immediately set about it.”

“I scarcely know what to say, my dear Lydia. I certainly should like the attempt to be made; for, independently of the money which would thus be devoted to a good purpose, the interest it would awaken for the spiritual welfare of others, might lead to future active exertions in the same blessed cause, and, perhaps, be instrumental in convincing the mind of the necessity of personal religion. Yet I cannot help fearing, with Caroline, that it may lead to unpleasant results.”

“But, cousin, if it *should* ever be known, we could have no hesitation in acknowledging the truth; and I am sure no one has any right to find fault with us, or could reasonably do so. Come, you must allow me to become the foundress of a missionary association. Here is a *sou*, which I found yesterday in the garden; I have offered it to everybody in the house, and, as it seems to belong to no one, it shall be the first mite in our little treasury. I propose that the subscriptions be one half-penny per week, with permission to increase the amount at pleasure; and that the first Sunday of every month, when we read the missionary papers, and use the missionary prayer, we make a general collection among ourselves, in aid of the same good cause. You cannot say that the amount of subscription is too high; and I am sure that money will procure us more real pleasure, than that which is spent in cakes and *fromages de lait*.”

It was impossible to resist the sanguine anticipations and eloquent appeal of Lydia. Before the close of that day, she had communicated her plan to all the English girls, except two or three of the younger ones, whose indiscretion she feared; and her success even surpassed her expectations. Her companions readily entered into her views, and some with an ardor almost equal to her own. There was something delightful in the idea of a little association exclusively their own; an association purely Protestant, and, above all, entirely English. These were, perhaps, the only motives of some, while others merely yielded to the influence of ex-

ample; but a few were actuated by a higher and nobler feeling, a sincere and lively interest in the success of the gospel.

Whatever might have been the motives, however, that first actuated our young contributors, they soon felt a warm affection for the little society they had formed. The subscriptions and donations, indeed, were trifling, and might well excite a smile, in those accustomed to the magnificent scale on which such institutions are carried on in England; but, to these isolated young people, there was an inexpressible charm in their humble missionary plan; and, at Lydia's suggestion, it was unanimously resolved that their infant society should be called the "Exile Missionary Association."

Charlotte and Lucy Barton had been excluded from the secret; the former being considered too much under French influence, and the latter too young for discretion. They had, however, observed that a monthly collection was made, and inquired its object. Miss Lushington, to whom the question was addressed, replied, that it was to be sent to England for the poor, and excused herself to Emily, by observing, that her answer contained only the truth, though not *the whole truth*; "for you know," said she, "the ignorant heathen, who have never had the gospel, are *poor*, in the most extensive sense of the word, and theirs is indeed the most deplorable kind of poverty."

Emily was not quite satisfied with this reasoning, but she scarcely knew what course it would be best to pursue; and the statement of Miss Lushington to the children remained, therefore, unexplained. At the next monthly meeting, Charlotte and Lucy requested that they might be allowed to contribute a small sum to the collection for the poor, and were, of course, not refused. Emily, however, charged her friends not to urge them to give anything; but the little girls always came prepared with money for the occasion, which they gave with so much good-will, that it was at length resolved to make them acquainted with the true nature and design of the society, at the next monthly meeting.

More than three weeks previous to that event, however, Madame d'Elfort informed her pupils that the Abbé Méry, her confessor, would come the next day to the school, for the purpose of soliciting the contributions of the young ladies, to a fund for defraying the expenses of the charity-children's clothing, on the occasion of the *première communion*, and for the purchase of their wax tapers. She requested that her pupils would all be provided with money, when he came, as she was anxious that her school should furnish a respectable collection; and, for this purpose, she directed the teachers to ascertain that the little ones, as well as their elder companions, were possessed of sufficient funds for the occasion.

The English girls generally considered this requisition as a tax, and loudly complained of it among themselves, as an abuse of

authority, which compelled them to sanction, and pay for, the superstitious rites of the Popish church. Several of them were, however, examining the contents of their purses, and calculating how little they could give, without being reprimanded, when Helen entered, with a countenance which instantly announced disagreeable tidings.

"I have just been to my room," said she, "where I was busily engaged in putting away some linen, when, as the door which opens into Madame d'Elfort's room stood ajar, I heard Mademoiselle St. André leading in Charlotte and Lucy Barton. She complained that they had no money left for to-morrow's collection, and that they assigned as a reason, their having given all that remained of their last allowance to Miss Mortimer."

"It was for the poor," said Charlotte; "there was a collection last Sunday in Miss Mortimer's room, and we, of course, contributed like the rest."

"But remember, Charlotte," mildly interposed little Lucy, "we were not asked to give anything. It was all quite free, and we needed not have given so much as we did. Had we known that Monsieur Méry was coming to-morrow, we might easily have kept a few *sous*."

"What is all this?" inquired Madame d'Elfort, in a tone of displeasure. "What authority has Mademoiselle Mortimer to make collections? And who are the poor for whom she thus exerts herself?"

"Mademoiselle St. André replied, with one of her scornful, ironical smiles, that 'she understood Miss Mortimer collected money for the English poor, and that it was soon to be transmitted to England.'"

"Impossible!" exclaimed Madame d'Elfort, "Miss Mortimer could never think of collecting for the English poor, while there are so many objects of charity in our immediate neighborhood. But I will see to it," she added, rising; "I must inquire into this business, and see that Miss Barton's money is returned, for I must have none of my young ladies penniless to-morrow."

"As soon as I heard this," continued Helen, "I ran hither to warn you of the danger, for I am afraid we shall all have a tremendous examination, and perhaps a thundering reprimand, if nothing worse. I wish those tiresome little creatures had never known or seen anything of our collections. It will be necessary, of course, to give them back the sum they have contributed; but what I fear is, that our cherished little missionary secret may come to the knowledge of the French; and then we shall be forbidden to continue our meetings, and our dear society."

"The money, of course," observed Emily, "must be returned to Charlotte and Lucy; but if Madame d'Elfort asks me any questions, I shall immediately tell her the whole truth, whatever the

consequences may be ; for you know, my dear friends, we are forbidden to 'do evil, that good may come.'

All the English party looked very sorrowful, at the idea of their favorite project being thus frustrated. Emily immediately sought the little Bartons, and, after explaining to them the object of the collection, gave them back the trifling sum they had contributed. She felt somewhat agitated, at the prospect of an explanation with Madame d'Elfort ; but, from some cause which was never revealed, that lady avoided all mention of the subject ; and the little society, therefore, proceeded as before.

The next morning, the abbé paid his promised visit to the school-room, and delivered a speech to the young ladies, in which he labored to prove the utility of the object he had in view, and assured his auditors that their contributions would be accepted by heaven, as infinitely meritorious, and conducive to their eternal salvation. The consequence of this address was, as he expected, a liberal collection ; and, after the usual return, on his part, of flattering praise, he left the school-room, accompanied by Madame d'Elfort. Emily, who had not been present, encountered them on her way from the music room ; and her governess took her by the hand, to introduce her to Monsieur Méry.

The abbé was a man of benevolent character, and had lately taken a warm-interest in the fate of an English family residing at S——, which had been reduced to a state of great destitution. He had been many years in England, whither he had fled from the horrors of the Revolution, and where he had been treated with that generosity and kindness which were so liberally bestowed on the unhappy fugitives. These obligations he was ever ready to acknowledge, with a gratitude which did honor to his character ; and his partiality for the English was as proverbial as it was sincere. He had, therefore, exerted all his influence, to assist the distressed family, and had called on Madame d'Elfort to forward his object. That lady placed the case in the hands of Emily, by whom an appeal was made to the English pupils, in behalf of their unfortunate compatriots, and a respectable sum collected, for a supply of their necessities. She had also mentioned the subject to the English Protestant minister, and, through his exertions, a subscription was opened among the English residents of S——, which restored the objects of their bounty to a state of comfort and independence.

The abbé had expressed a wish to know the young lady who had been the active agent in this work of charity ; and when Madame d'Elfort presented Emily, he addressed her in a strain of adulation which very much disconcerted her.

"My gratitude to the English, Mademoiselle, makes me anxious to return, in any degree that may be in my power, the obligations I have received from them ; and the affection I bear your country

makes my heart thrill with pleasure, when I see any of its children, like you, exhibiting a character of surpassing excellence, and aspiring to that crown of glory which is the reward of charity and benevolence."

Emily felt it her duty to disclaim the sentiments contained in this speech, and, therefore, modestly observed, that eternal life was the gift of God, and not to be purchased by any human merit.

Madame d'Elfort smiled at this remark, and said to the abbé,

"My dear father, this is one of those singular notions which I have mentioned to you, as distinguishing my excellent young friend. She insists upon it, that there is no merit whatever in good works; and yet I never knew any one more anxious to do good than herself."

"Indeed, Madam," replied Emily, "I am deeply conscious that 'in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,' and that I cannot do one good action, without the influence of the Spirit of God. I dare not, therefore, accept praises which I do not deserve."

"Mademoiselle's modesty," observed the priest, "only enhances the value of her many virtues, and she is quite right, in saying that we all need the assistance of the Holy Spirit; but she must allow me to tell her, that it is a highly dangerous doctrine, which teaches that there is no merit in good works; for it takes away that incentive to virtue which is always found in the hope of a glorious reward. Will you permit me, my dear young friend, to inquire where you have learned that demoralizing tenet?"

"Call it not demoralizing, Sir, for it is the doctrine of the Bible."

A slight expression of impatience passed over the mild countenance of the abbé.

"On what, then, do you consider that a Christian's claim to heaven is founded?"

"On the death and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, who alone has purchased eternal life for all those who believe on him. The Bible tells us that 'whosoever believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life,' and that 'if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.'"

"But what inducement, then, does your system offer, to the performance of good works? If there is no merit in them, there can be no sin in neglecting them."

"What can be a stronger motive, Sir, than the desire to glorify Him 'who loved us, and gave himself for us?' If our faith is genuine, it will prove itself to be so, by its appropriate fruits; and those who know that 'without holiness, no man can see the Lord,' will certainly strive to become 'holy, in all manner of conversation.'"

"Well, *ma chère demoiselle*," said the abbé, evidently desirous to change the ground of argument, "I cannot dispute with you on so

delicate a subject; but I must be permitted to hope that, as members of the true church, we shall one day meet in those mansions of eternal blessedness, where, I have no doubt, your virtues will procure you that crown of glory which is the reward of piety and good works."

"My virtues! oh! say not so, I beseech you!" exclaimed Emily, clasping her hands, in the energy of her feelings. "I should not dare to risk my soul on the best action I ever did, for I know there is so much sin in it, that it could only ensure my condemnation."

A glance of pity, and almost of contempt, were exchanged between Madame d'Elfort and the priest; and then the latter, giving up the argument, mentioned the purport of his visit to the house, and added, "that he doubted not Mademoiselle Mortimer would show her usual liberality to his poor little communicants." Emily felt that she was not at liberty to refuse; she therefore gave a small donation, observing, "that she was happy to contribute to the *clothing* of the poor children."

She was then permitted to withdraw, which she did with sensations of a very mixed nature. When she looked at the venerable figure of the abbé, his white locks, and the benignant expression of his countenance, she felt quite inclined to love and respect him; but when she remembered, that he was one of those false teachers who delude the ignorant, by inculcating doctrines which they *must* know to be erroneous, she almost shuddered at the idea of the fearful guilt he incurred.

"And this priest," she mentally exclaimed, "this old man, who has been so long in England, surrounded by gospel light, who is at liberty to read the Bible, and *must*, therefore, be aware of the awful risk he runs,—does he thus wilfully lead the blind to the brink of the pit? or is he, too, the dupe of these dangerous falsehoods?"

This was a question which it was impossible to resolve; but it was a painful one to the feelings of Emily, for it alternately excited pity, indignation, and sorrow.

CHAPTER XX.

PROTESTANT INCONSISTENCY.

Wo unto the world, because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but wo unto that man by whom the offence cometh.—MATTHEW xviii. 7.

THE English party at Madame d'Elfort's received a new addition, by the arrival of a young lady about sixteen, the daughter of a clergyman. Emily hoped, from her father's profession, that she would be found, at least, seriously disposed; but she was doomed to be disappointed. Eliza Devereux was one of those every-day characters of whom little can be said; and she seemed to have no idea of religion, beyond that of a compliance with its most general outward observances.

The Sunday morning arrived, and the weather was beautiful. A universal feeling of delight pervaded every bosom, as the Protestant girls beheld the cloudless atmosphere, and anticipated their pleasant, quiet walk to church, with no Roman Catholic companions to throw a restraint on their conversation, or mar the harmony of their sentiments. It was one of those lovely mornings in early spring, when, without well knowing why, the heart seemed to bound with joyous exultation, and an unaccountable buoyancy is imparted to the before languid spirits. Emily felt its invigorating influence, and her pleasurable feelings were not a little enhanced by the sparkling glances that greeted her, whenever she encountered the eyes of her companions. Breakfast was over, and the usual business, so unsuitable to the Sabbath, of paying the weekly allowances of pocket-money, was also concluded, when Madame d'Elfort addressed Emily.

"Mademoiselle Mortimer, have you sufficient room at the chapel for Miss Devereux, or shall I send the church-warden notice that we want an additional pew?"

Emily replied, that she believed they might find room for her, but that the pews were nearly full already.

At this moment, Mademoiselle St. André informed Madame d'Elfort, that Miss Devereux did not wish to attend the Protestant chapel. A half-suppressed exclamation of surprise burst from every lip, and every eye was instantly fixed on the young lady in question. Madame d'Elfort inquired her reasons for so singular a declaration and she replied, that her father had enjoined her to attend the Catholic service at the cathedral.

"But, wherefore, my dear child, should you do so?" inquired the governess. "Are you not a Protestant? and is not your father a Protestant minister?"

"Yes, madam, but papa wishes me to attend the French service, because he thinks it will help me to acquire the language."

This curious reason was received with a general smile of ridicule, from which even Madame d'Elfort could not refrain; but perceiving that the poor girl was very much confused, she replied, with a look at her pupils, which awed the rising merriment.

"You must surely, my dear, be mistaken in what you say: your papa cannot but be aware that our church-service is not in French, but in Latin. But, however that may be, I cannot allow you to depart so seriously from the customs of your religion, without clearer authority, and more conclusive reasons. I shall write to your father on this subject;—in the mean time, you will attend the Protestant chapel, with your English companions."

The whole company then dispersed, to prepare for their respective places of worship; but the subject of that morning's conversation was not so easily dismissed. It furnished matter for much indignant and sorrowful discussion, among the English girls, and gave occasion to many sneers and taunts from the French. Rose de Liancourt was, perhaps, the only one who made no ungenerous remark; but Mademoiselle St. André seemed to triumph in the advantage it gave them. "So much for the religion of a Protestant minister!" she exclaimed, while the scornful curl of her lip spoke even more loudly than her words. "Did you ever hear of a Catholic priest's authorizing, or even allowing, any member of his family to attend a Protestant church, for any consideration whatever? No, never! he would not even countenance the meanest member of his flock in such an action! But your ministers are so indifferent on the subject, or rather so little convinced of the truth of their own doctrines, that they send their children to a Catholic church, to learn French from a Latin service!—thus displaying at once their irreligion and their ignorance!"

If the French pupils did not all say so much, they evidently enjoyed the malicious observations of their superior; and the serious English party found that it was indeed "a day of trouble, of rebuke, and blasphemy," and of triumph to their relentless adversaries. They felt that it was a time of humiliation, when they were called upon to "take up the cross," and follow their Saviour through "evil report, as well as good report." And they trembled, when they thought of the fearful responsibility incurred, by those who thus cast a stumbling-block in the way of their Redeemer's cause.

Their pleasant walk to the church was rendered unusually sad and silent, by this painful occurrence. The presence of Miss Devereux, of course, prevented any general or audible expression of their sentiments on the subject, and there was an almost involuntary feeling of reserve in their intercourse with her. Some of

them indeed seemed even to shrink from her; but Lydia took pity on the poor girl, and drew her into conversation. Emily and Helen always walked together; for the latter had exacted that promise from the former, and would not relinquish her claim, unless on very particular occasions; and this opportunity for unreserved confidence was very sweet to both parties.

When they assembled in the afternoon, they were again surprised by the discovery that Miss Devereux had no Bible! Lydia's indignation burst forth at this announcement, and she asked how it was possible that a Protestant clergyman could send his child anywhere, and more especially to such a place, without furnishing her with the book he professed to regard as the foundation of his faith?

"Do you never read the Bible?" she inquired, while Emily and Caroline strove in vain to check her, by their looks of disapprobation.

"Oh! yes," replied Miss Devereux, "we always read it at home, on the Sunday afternoon, and sometimes during the week; but I was so careless as to forget to bring one."

"Your father ought to have attended to it," rejoined the impetuous Lydia; but her sister prevented her saying more, and it was arranged that she should read with one of the others. The poor girl seemed much mortified at the situation in which she was placed, and annoyed by the feeling of disapprobation so evident in her companions. She expressed her intention of writing to her father for a Bible, and seemed anxious to conciliate esteem, by paying great attention to the service.

Weeks rolled on, and Madame d'Elfort received an answer to the letter she had written to the Rev. Mr. Devereux. In it, that gentleman again expressed his wish, that his daughter should attend the Roman Catholic service, as he considered she might be benefited by hearing French sermons. That lady, however, with a firmness which did her honor, refused to allow this arrangement, unless the young lady openly abjured her present faith, and professed herself a convert to Popery. The reasons she alleged were, the necessity of consistency in matters of religion, and the danger of her compliance in this particular being misinterpreted, and so becoming the means of injuring her establishment in the opinion of Protestants. Her good sense and resolution prevailed, and the divine at length consented that his daughter should continue to attend the English chapel.

This decision was followed by another startling incident. Little Agnes Beverley had long manifested an increased partiality for the doctrines and customs of Popery, and she one day confided to Mademoiselle Laval her desire of attending confession, and entering on a preparatory course of instruction, with a view of her becoming, at a proper age, a member of the church of Rome. The

teacher communicated this intelligence to Madame d'Elfort, who, with a prudence highly commendable, refused to let the child take a single step in the affair, and insisted that she should dismiss all thoughts of such a change, until she had either attained to years of discretion, or succeeded in obtaining the consent of her parents. The wisdom of this decision was soon apparent; for the volatile girl's whim, not being encouraged, or fostered by flattery, gradually yielded to the influence of time and other fancies, and she lost all desire of becoming a Roman Catholic, though she too frequently followed their customs and example. These circumstances were known to but few of the English boarders, and they thought it best to be as silent as possible on the subject; but Lydia, and one or two others, undertook to reason with Agnes, and succeeded so well, that she was thoroughly ashamed of her conduct.

It now began to be rumored in the school, that Mademoiselle Laval was going to resign her charge; and the report was soon after confirmed. That young lady had for some time wished to embrace a religious life, and was now about to put her design into execution, by joining a society of Grey sisters in the south of France. Her gentle manners, and benevolent disposition, peculiarly fitted her for the work she was undertaking; but Emily and her friends sincerely regretted her approaching departure; for her kindness and indulgence had endeared her to their hearts. They were surprised to find, however, that this was not the case with the generality of the boarders; for her very mildness and lenity had had the too common effect of inspiring contempt, rather than affection. As she had not been feared, so neither had she been respected; her conduct was familiarly canvassed, and the charges of favoritism and partiality frequently, though very unjustly, brought against her.

Lydia was so incensed at the ingratitude of many of the boarders, who repaid the indulgence of Mademoiselle Laval by expressions of pleasure at her approaching departure, that with her usual warmth, she told them she hoped they would be punished as they deserved by being subjected to the rule of a tyrant, instead of the gentle and ill-requited teacher they so little appreciated. And her indignant prediction was soon fulfilled.

Mademoiselle Laval departed, followed by the sincere and undisguised regrets of a few, who knew her amiable qualities, and had learned to estimate her worth. Among these were Rose de Liancourt, and the serious English party. The next day a lady arrived to fill her situation, whose appearance and manners presented a perfect contrast to those of her kind-hearted predecessor. Pride, bigotry, and reserve, were the characteristics of *Mdlle. Mornay*; and the startling severity with which she began her

reign, at once terrified and revolted those who had long been accustomed to very different treatment. A thousand little indulgences, which the good nature of the former teacher had suffered to encroach on the almost monastic strictness of the school-regulations, were instantly withdrawn, and a great number of unnecessary restrictions imposed, to which, hitherto, the boarders had been totally unaccustomed. Added to all this, there was a stiffness and *hauteur* in her behavior to them, which were calculated to make her anything but popular; and it is almost unnecessary to say, that she was soon hated by many, and thoroughly disliked by all.

Emily and Caroline, however, had no reason to complain of her in this respect, for Mademoiselle Mornay seemed, from the first, to have conceived a predilection for them. She would occasionally enter into conversation with them, and they found her a woman of good abilities, extensive information, and great uprightness of character, though these sterling qualities were greatly obscured by an austere temper, and unprepossessing manners. She was extremely fond of Italian, a language in which Emily had made considerable proficiency; and she would often request her assistance, in reading or translating it. This subject paved the way for much conversation between them, and Emily could not but acknowledge her to be a clever, sensible woman.

But there was one circumstance, which made the change of teachers particularly disagreeable to the Protestants. Mademoiselle was what the French call *dévot*e, and her devotion often exhibited itself in bigotry and intolerance. She introduced many customs into the school, to which it was impossible for the English boarders conscientiously to conform. Among these was the repetition of the Ave Maria, or salutation to the Virgin, at noon, and at six in the evening, when the cathedral bell always sounded for that purpose. At this signal she required the whole school to rise, and recite it after her. The following is a literal translation —

“Hail, Mary, full of grace! the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is Jesus, the fruit of thy womb.

“Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us poor sinners, both now and at the time of our death!”

When the idolatrous nature of this prayer is considered, it cannot be thought surprising that the Protestants should refuse to utter it. A general look at Emily besought her interference, and she felt it her duty to remonstrate against this order, as soon as it was delivered by Mademoiselle Mornay. She represented to her their difference of religion; and requested an exemption from a rule with which they could not comply. The teacher seemed angry, and would most probably have refused this request; but Madame d'Elfort happily entered the room at that moment, and

to her Emily referred the question. Her hopes from that lady's general impartiality were not disappointed: she ordered that the Protestants should remain seated, and should in no wise be required to join the *ave*.

Another innovation in the school was that of compelling the younger children to kiss the ground, or kneel on the floor, as a punishment for trivial offences. This was at first inflicted only on the French; but the English girls were thunderstruck, when they heard the order given to Maria Lushington, in consequence of her transgressing the rules by talking. Maria was giddy and thoughtless, but extremely high-spirited; and the feelings of national religion were immediately aroused in her bosom. She glanced at some of her companions, and, encouraged by their looks, boldly replied, that "she had been taught to kneel only to God." The effect of this declaration was electric. Mademoiselle Mornay's anger seemed ready to burst like a thunder-cloud on the daring little rebel; but a moment's reflection evidently recalled her prudence, and she changed the punishment, by condemning the culprit to write six French verbs. Maria glorièd in her triumph, and so did many others; and when Emily found that, from that time, the Protestants were exempted from the obnoxious rule, she felt thankful that the circumstance had been overruled for good, though the young champion had certainly been actuated by pride, rather than by any religious feeling.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FÊTE-DIEU.

Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them.—Exodus xx. 4, 5.

Time rolled on, and the beginning of June brought round the period when the *Sacre* or *Fête Dieu*, was to be celebrated. On this occasion, the host is carried about in procession, through all the principal streets; and, as this homage to the sacramental wafer was believed to have the effect of sanctifying the place, of making an atonement for all public offences, and entailing a peculiar blessing on its due performance, every effort was made to invest it with

all possible solemnity and splendor. The fronts of the houses were hung with white draperies, and ornamented with garlands and bouquets of flowers. It was the Sunday morning, and the gay population, dressed in their holiday-clothes, were thronging the different avenues that led to the cathedral. The streets were carefully swept, and profusely strewed with flowers; the bells of the town rung out their most joyous peals; and all around was bustle, gaiety and animation.

The English boarders at Madame d'Elfort's had invariably stayed away from divine service, in order to witness the ceremony. This, indeed, was considered a compliment, which they owed to their Roman Catholic instructors, and to the religion of the country in which they then resided. On this occasion, however, Emily, Lydia, Helen, Louisa, and a few others, had expressed their resolution of not conforming to the custom, and had requested to be conducted to the chapel as usual. The subject excited much interest, and gave rise to many discussions among the English. Miss Gordon, and a party of her friends, maintained that such a course would be extremely unwise, as it would not only deprive them of the sight, but, they were quite sure, would highly offend Madame d'Elfort. On the other hand, it was replied, that, by wilfully absenting themselves from the worship of God, they would be violating the sanctity of the Sabbath, as well as countenancing a ceremony which they knew to be idolatrous; and, that, even supposing their governess were displeased, it was their duty, on every occasion, to "obey God rather than man." The point was repeatedly discussed, and the debates grew very warm; but the serious party remained firm, and, while some were convinced by their arguments, others began to feel ashamed of their opposition. Fanny Gordon, however, and a few others, were obstinate in their determination of witnessing the ceremony; and there was every probability of a division taking place on the occasion. The teachers and French boarders were extremely angry, at the slight thus intended to be offered to their church. Madame d'Elfort looked grave and seemed at first indignant; but she permitted them to act as they pleased; observing that she had too much respect for consistency, to put any restraint on their decision.

The morning, however, was stormy and lowering, and as it seemed to threaten rain, they were not permitted to attend the chapel. This, of course, settled the question; the opposition were delighted, the Roman Catholics triumphed; and, as the weather eventually became remarkably fine, the disappointed party were obliged to follow the others, to view the ceremony.

Madame d'Elfort took her English pupils to the house of a friend of hers, in the town, from whose balcony they could see the whole procession to great advantage. There were temporary altars erected in the streets, the steps of which were covered with

carpeting; these are called *reposoirs*, and intended as rests for the host, in its progress through the town. Everything costly and splendid that could be borrowed in the neighborhood, was profusely heaped on these altars, and they certainly presented a magnificent *coup-d'œil*. Silver candlesticks, and other articles of plate, rich vases, gold and silver goblets, valuable rings, necklaces, and bracelets, were readily lent for the occasion, by the poor deluded votaries, who really thought they were "doing God service," as well as displaying their piety and devotion. On each *reposoir* was placed an open miniature temple, covered with a profusion of rich lace; it terminated in a spire, crowned with the choicest and most beautiful flowers.

Madame d'Elfort and her French pupils attended mass, and then accompanied the procession, which issued from the cathedral immediately after. The host, or consecrated wafer, was carried by the *curé* in a small silver box, under a canopy of white silk ornamented with ribbons, flowers, and feathers. Three or four other priests supported this canopy, and they were surrounded by all the clergy of the town and neighborhood, in their splendid robes of crimson, purple, and white, embroidered in gold and silver. They were preceded by a band of music, all the civil authorities in full costume, and about five hundred young women of the *congrégation*, dressed in white, and shrouded in their long muslin veils. Immediately before the host, walked a number of little boys, children of the principal families, in white surplices, with girdles of rose-colored ribbon. They were bareheaded, and carried baskets of flowers, which they scattered profusely in the way. Emily was informed, by those young ladies who had seen the pageant before, that these children were frequently furnished with artificial wings, that they might personate angels preceding the *bon Dieu*! One priest carried an immense gilt cross before the host, and another a censer, smoking with incense.

When the procession arrived at one of the *reposoirs*, it stopped; the *congréganistes* and public authorities ranged themselves on both sides of the street; and, while the spectators fell on their knees, the idol was carried up the steps, and deposited in the temple prepared for its reception. At the same time, guns were fired from the castle, and from a small portable tower that accompanied the procession; and the priests began to chant some Latin service appointed for the occasion, with a multitude of genuflexions, and other marks of homage. When this was concluded, the procession resumed its march, ushered by the thundering of cannon, the ringing of bells, and the clang of martial music; followed by the military and a multitude of people, and greeted by crowds of kneeling spectators. The same ceremony was repeated in the afternoon of the following Sunday, with this only difference,—that the military and civil authorities did not accompany it.

THE conversation of the little circle, after their afternoon service, naturally turned on the events of the morning, and Miss Gordon again accused Emily of severity in the remarks she made on the subject.

"You say the Catholics worship saints and images," said she, "though even they themselves deny the imputation; but, even supposing you were right in that instance, I do not see how you can call their worship of the host idolatry. They really believe it to be God, and I certainly think they have strong reasons on their side; for did not our Saviour say, '*This is my body*?'"

"Yes, my dear Miss Gordon, but have you never observed, how very generally our Lord expressed himself in figures and metaphors? Did he not call himself 'the Door,' 'the Way,' 'the Vine,' 'the Light,' and a great many other things equally allegorical? Yet you would never think of interpreting *literally* any of these expressions. When the Saviour instituted the sacrament, His body had not yet been broken, nor His blood shed. This has always been one of the most distinguishing points of difference, between the Popish and Reformed churches; and it is one for which an innumerable company of martyrs have died. Only think of the revolting abuses to which the dogma of transubstantiation leads; and, also, of the awful blasphemy of saying that a wafer, made by human hands, 'contains the *body, blood, soul, and divinity*, of our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

A universal shudder seemed to creep over the little party; but Miss Gordon angrily replied,

"I know all that, Miss Mortimer, as well as yourself; but why should you condemn the poor people for it? They are not allowed to read the Bible, and, therefore, cannot know that it is wrong."

"Far be it from me to condemn," replied Emily; "it is to God they will have to answer, for surrendering their reason, and their conscience, to the guidance of sinners like themselves. But, while we pity the poor deluded people, and shudder at the fearful guilt incurred by the priests, it surely becomes us to maintain the truth of our scriptural belief, and be grateful that we are delivered from the thralldom of so antichristian a church."

Fanny Gordon only answered by a sneer, and, their time being expired, the little party broke up.

The same evening, all the ladies of the *congrégation* assembled in the cathedral, in order to perform what is called "*l'amende honorable*," in other words, to make a public confession, not only of their own sins but those of all the town and neighborhood. Mademoiselle d'Alby, one of the ladies who gave lessons in the school, politely offered to take the English pupils to witness the ceremony, and they accordingly accompanied her. She belonged to the *congrégation*, and, as soon as she had seated her young

charges advantageously, she left them to join her companions, in the large space railed in before the principal altar. The service began with chanting Latin, after which the confession which was very general and solemn, was pronounced by the *curé* in French, and repeated aloud by all the *congréganistes*. There was something exceedingly interesting and picturesque, in the appearance of these young ladies, as they knelt before the altar, in their uniform white dresses, and long flowing veils: and the effect was heightened to enchantment, when, at the conclusion, they sang a hymn, in which the touching sweetness of their voices blended, in richest melody, with the majestic peals of the organ. Emily could not wonder at the tears of emotion which she saw trembling in the eyes of several of her companions, nor at the pale cheek and averted eyes of Caroline; her own feelings were strongly excited, and she could not help fearing the influence, which these fascinating appeals to the senses must exercise over the ardent imagination of youth.

A dreadful suspicion had lately forced itself on her mind;—she could not avoid admitting, however unwillingly, that Caroline's conduct evinced a growing partiality for everything French, and a leaning to the doctrines and observances of Popery. She had long watched her with anxious solicitude, and had sought her confidence in vain. The reserve in which she had intrenched herself had wounded and repelled Emily; and, though she longed to know the cause of her dejection, and to comfort her in the struggles she evidently endured, she had found it impossible to engage her in conversation, respecting the cause of her grief. And, besides all this, Caroline was now so completely absorbed by her friendship for Sophia Dorville, that the cousins saw but little of each other. The uneasiness produced by these concurring circumstances preyed deeply on the mind of Emily; but she comforted herself with the reflection, that in a few weeks their year of trial would terminate, and her father or uncle would come to re-conduct them to the shores of Protestant England, where the spells of Popery would, she trusted, be broken, and the sweet confidence of sisterly affection once more established between them.

That evening the young ladies were allowed to walk in the garden till supper-time, and Emily availed herself of the opportunity, to enjoy a ramble with her friend Rose. She had observed of late, that a shade of reserve was gradually stealing over the freedom of their intercourse, and she wished to inquire the cause of Rose's altered manner; for she feared that she might have taken offence, at a rebuke which she had given her about a week before. Emily had often been shocked, as every reflecting person must be, at the profanation of sacred terms, and the irreverent use of the name of God, so awfully prevalent among the Roman Catholics. She was delighted to perceive that the piety and good

feeling of Rose generally preserved her from the contagion; but one day, being very much provoked by the malicious persecutions of Clémentine Verment, she was inadvertently betrayed into uttering the customary '*mon Dieu!*' so deplorably common in the school.

Emily, who was present, instantly laid her hand on her arm, and repeated, in a low but emphatic voice, the third commandment: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Rose started at the words, and, at first, attempted to defend herself, by alleging that she had used the expression as an ejaculatory prayer; Emily, however, remonstrated on the sinfulness of trifling with so sacred a name, and the irreverence with which it is generally used; and Rose at length acknowledged herself in the wrong, and promised to avoid a repetition of the offence.

This evening, however, somewhat to the surprise of Emily she recurred to the subject.

"I have consulted my confessor about it," said she, "and repeated to him what you said to me; and his opinion is, that the custom is a bad one,—that it is very wrong, but not sinful."

"Dear Rose," replied Emily, "can you explain to me the difference between what is wrong, and what is sinful? For I own I cannot perceive the distinction, in matters that relate to God and religion."

"There is a great difference, no doubt," rejoined Rose, "though I am not equal to discussing the subject; it is my duty to submit on all such points to the opinion of my spiritual director."

"But, my dear friend, does not the scripture declare that whatsoever is not of faith is sin?"

"Excuse me, my dear Miss Mortimer, we must not speak of these things, and you will, therefore, allow me to request that the subject may be dropped."

Emily was silent, and a considerable pause in the conversation ensued, for her mind was occupied with indignant and sorrowful reflections, on the duplicity of the priest, and the melancholy subjection of her friend's mind to his dangerous influence. At length Rose resumed,—

"Have you heard the sad account of poor Thérèse Beaulieu's danger?"

"No, I did not know that her illness was considered serious. Is she in much danger?"

"I fear so; and what makes her case more painful is, that her own imprudence seems to have been the cause; and some persons are severe enough to consider her complaint as a judgment from heaven."

"How so, dear Rose? pray, explain yourself."

"You know that Thérèse was *coude en blanc*; that is, during a

dangerous illness with which she was afflicted, her parents, anxious to secure the blessed Virgin's intercession in her favor, laid her under a vow, in case of her recovery, not to wear any colors but white and blue, for the space of three years. This engagement she strictly observed till last month, when, being at home, she was invited to a large party. It only wanted two or three days to the end of the stipulated three years, and she was unfortunately tempted to anticipate their completion, by wearing some article of forbidden color. She caught a severe cold in returning home, and it has brought on a return of her former complaint, which I am sorry to hear threatens to prove fatal. Poor Thérèse ! I pity her sincerely, for she is a very good and amiable girl."

"And can you believe, Rose, that her illness is sent by heaven, as a punishment for wearing a dress of any particular color?"

"I should be very sorry indeed to think so; but I dare not form any opinion on so difficult a subject."

Before Emily could reply, Rose left her to speak to Madame d'Elfort, and, as she did not return to her again, Emily joined Louisa, Lydia and Helen, and walked with them till the supper-bell summoned them back to the house.

Thérèse Beaulieu was a tall, fair and slender girl, of sixteen, whose delicate appearance and transparent complexion betrayed a constitutional tendency to consumption, and seemed to mark her for the victim of early death. Emily's attention had been first drawn to her, by the circumstance of her never wearing anything but white and blue, and by the effect of these colors, in making her extreme paleness appear still more striking. She had been told the reason, and had often pitied the poor girl, whose life was thus supposed to be preserved by the efficacy of a superstitious vow. She had long been a boarder at Madame d'Elfort's; but, as her parents resided near the town, she frequently spent a few days with them. It was during one of those visits, that an invitation to a gay party had led her to act on the supposition, that a few days more or less could not make much difference in the fulfilment of her vow, and that the Virgin would not be very strict in taking account of the time. It was not surprising, that, in the precarious state of her health, an exposure to the night air, after the fatigue and heat of dancing, should have been productive of a severe cold, which had subsequently settled on her lungs; yet she was now the theme of conversation to the whole school and neighborhood, as having brought on herself the judgment of heaven, as a punishment for her broken vow.

To Emily's frequent inquiries about Thérèse, the constant answer was, that her disorder was rapidly increasing, and in a few days her recovery was declared hopeless. Her approaching death was announced by Madame d'Elfort to her pupils, and threw a chilling gloom over every heart.'

"My dear children," said that lady, "I am happy to inform you that she bears her sufferings like an angel, and prepares for death like a saint. Such, indeed, is the tenderness of her conscience, that it made her at first very miserable. She had, somehow, persuaded herself that she was very sinful, and had a great deal to repent of. She wept bitterly for a long time, and refused to be comforted, calling herself a poor miserable sinner, and saying that no one needed a Saviour more than she did. Her friends were very much distressed at these gloomy fancies, for none knew so well as they the virtues of the interesting sufferer. In vain did they assure her that she had always been, even from her infancy, a dutiful daughter, an affectionate sister, and exemplary in the discharge of every relative, social, and Christian duty; she still wept, and accused herself, and it was not until her confessor had joined with her parents, in assuring her she had nothing to fear, that her conscience was tranquillized, and her mind restored to composure. I have seen her to-day, and can testify that her humility is truly edifying."

At the conclusion of this speech, the eyes of Emily and Lydia met, in a glance that seemed to speak volumes. Emily looked at Rose, and perceived that she was struggling to repress her tears; but, as she hurried into the garden, they flowed in unrestrained abundance. Emily followed, and drew her arm through hers.

"My dearest Rose, you are unhappy! will you allow me to share your grief?"

"Dear, kind Emily, I thank you; but I can only sadden your heart, and you can impart no consolation to mine. Madame d'Elfort's account of poor Téhre'se has been like a dagger to my soul. It has brought before me that awful moment, when I, too, shall stand on the brink of eternity! and oh, Emily, what shall I do, when my sins thus rise up in fearful array before me? No one can have more heart-sins to repent of than I have; and I feel, deeply feel, that I have no merit or righteousness to counterbalance them or sustain my sinking heart, in the prospect of appearing before a holy God."

Emily pressed the hand of the sobbing girl, and, in a voice almost inarticulate from emotion, exclaimed,

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; my dear, dear Rose, can you not trust to *that*?"

The soft eyes of Rose were for a moment riveted on her friend's countenance, with an earnestness, an intensity of attention, that almost startled her. Her very soul seemed rising to her lips; but, on a sudden, the glow of emotion was succeeded by the paleness of death; she checked, with a painful effort, the words that were struggling for utterance; and, pressing one hand on her heart, while the other covered her eyes, she hurried into the house, as if she were afraid to trust herself any longer in Emily's society.

Emily's eyes followed her with mournful interest, and then re-

mained fixed on the ground, till she was aroused from her reverie by the approach of Lydia. Her face was flushed, and her eyes sparkled with indignation.

"Oh! Emily," she cried, "what do you think of these wicked priests? How can they thus wilfully deceive a poor creature at the point of death? Did you not hear Madame d'Elfort say, that the confessor had joined in persuading poor Thérèse that her virtues would save her? Oh! how dreadful it is to trust in such men!"

"It is, indeed, my love, an awful delusion, they would force on the poor girl, for 'by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified;' but it is, unfortunately, in strict accordance with the doctrines of their church."

"But, Emily, they *must* know better; they cannot be in ignorance, like the people they deceive; for they are at liberty to read the Bible, and, therefore, *cannot* but see that what they teach is directly contrary to the Word of God. And oh! how cruel, how barbarous, to deceive at such an awful moment! I met the abbé Méry just now, going up stairs with Madame d'Elfort, and he spoke to me in his usual soft, insinuating tone, but I felt so angry with him and his whole fraternity, that I could scarcely be civil to him; and, when he had passed me, I felt very much inclined to tell him that he was an unfeeling, unprincipled deceiver."

"Oh! it is indeed an awful and cruel thing, to endeavor thus to crush the salutary convictions of sin, which the Holy Spirit mercifully imparts, and to hurry the soul blindfold to the brink of eternity; but I hope and trust that the 'God of all grace' will have compassion on the intended victim, and by his Almighty power foil the machinations of her spiritual enemies. Let us pray for her, my dear Lydia, that 'the prey may be taken from the mighty.'"

A few days glided sadly away, and Thérèse Beaulieu was no more. Her dissolution was announced by Madame d'Elfort, with the additional information, that "she died like a saint;" and this was all that Emily could learn, on a subject which deeply and painfully interested her feelings. All the Roman Catholic pupils attended her funeral; she was buried in the church-yard of the village where her father's property was situated; flowers were strewn on her tomb, and her virtues recorded on the marble. An involuntary gloom rested on the school for a few days; Madame d'Elfort took advantage of it, to give occasional lectures on the necessity of paying the utmost attention to the duties of religion and morality; but the tide of every-day occupations, pleasures, and pursuits, soon rolled over the faint impression produced by the death of a school-fellow; and, in a short time, Thérèse Beaulieu was almost forgotten.

So dies in human hearts the thought of death,
E'en with the tender tear which nature sheds
O'er those we love;—we drop it in their grave

CHAPTER XXII.

TRAITS OF CHARACTER.

Judge not, that ye be not judged; for, with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.—*MATT. vii. 1, 2.*

THERE was one English girl, lately arrived in the school, whose manners, from the first, made her the object of general dislike. She had resided in France from her earliest childhood, and had naturally imbibed much of the French character; so much so, indeed, that she frequently expressed the utmost contempt for the English, and would scarcely acknowledge herself a native of England. This conduct, as may be supposed, prejudiced all the English against her; but, to Emily's surprise, it seemed to procure her but little favor, even among the French girls. Their national feeling of patriotism led them to despise a person, who spoke thus slightly of her native country; and, as Miss Leslie had not embraced the Popish religion, there was no sympathy existing on that subject, to counterbalance the impression produced by her unpopular expressions. Thus, she was disliked by one party, and avoided by the other, and soon found herself an isolated being, acknowledged as belonging to neither.

A few there were, indeed, among the English, who pitied the poor girl, and were convinced that her eccentricities arose entirely from a defective education. Emily and one or two others resolved, from the first, to be kind to her; and they were soon repaid by her grateful affection, and a visible improvement in her mind and manners. Maria Leslie was a girl of considerable abilities, and very warm feelings; but she had been spoiled by a French education, and the mismanagement of a mother who did not understand her character. There was an originality about her, which led her into a thousand errors, and made her commit a thousand absurdities; but her mind only required direction, and might easily have been guided into such paths as would, under the Divine blessing, have made her both a shining and a useful character. But, alas! she was left to wander in wild disorder, like a star that has lost its orbit.

She was considerably mortified, by the contempt she experienced from every one around her; and, when Emily explained the cause of it, and reasoned with her on the foolishness and impropriety of her conduct, she professed herself convinced, and expressed her resolution to adopt a more rational line of proceeding. This promise she fulfilled, as far as her habitual eccentricities would allow her; but the mischief was done, and could not

easily be repaired, even by her partial reformation. She could never hope to be a favorite with any one; and the prejudice she had herself excited continually displayed itself, in the conduct pursued towards her, as well by the teachers as the pupils. Her actions were always construed with more severity than those of any other, and her faults generally visited with heavier punishment. This, indeed, was chiefly owing to the extremely unfavorable character given of her to Madame d'Elfort by her mother, who, being unable to manage her, had sent her to school, with a request that she might be watched with monastic strictness, and treated with unbending severity. Emily felt that this exposure of her faults reflected more disgrace on the mother, than it did on the daughter; but she was almost the only one who had the candor to perceive that poor Maria's defects were really not such as could at all justify the account given of her.

Such, indeed, was the impression produced to her disadvantage, in the minds of the heads of the establishment, that Madame d'Elfort told Emily, the first Sunday after her arrival, that she felt some hesitation in sending her to chapel with the others.

"Do me the favor, my dear young friend," added that lady, "to cast an observing look at her now and then, during the services of your church, and to tell me candidly, when you return, how she has behaved. I can trust implicitly to your piety and good sense for an opinion; and if this unhappy girl is guilty of any indecorous behavior, I shall not suffer her to attend again."

Emily felt the task thus laid upon her an unpleasant one, and could not altogether repress a certain degree of apprehension, with regard to the conduct of a girl entrusted to her care under such unfavorable auspices. Her attention was, during the service, so fearfully bent on Miss Leslie, that she found it impossible to listen to either the prayers or the sermon with anything like devotion; but she was agreeably reassured by the quiet and unoffending demeanor of the poor girl. When several Sundays had passed in this manner, and she was still enabled to give a favorable account of her conduct to Madame d'Elfort, she ventured to express her conviction, that Mrs. Leslie had greatly exaggerated her daughter's faults; but the governess shook her head, and Emily saw that it was impossible, at least for the present, to lessen the prejudice that existed against her *protégée*, as Miss Leslie was frequently called in the school.

Perhaps a better description cannot be given, either of her character, or of the extreme severity with which her actions were judged, than by relating the following little incidents.

Maria had been deficient in her lessons one Saturday afternoon, and the penalty of her disobedience was a prohibition against her attending public worship the next day. The English girls were astonished and alarmed at this punishment, for it was one which

had never yet been inflicted on any pupil. Emily attempted to remonstrate with Madame d'Elfort; but she was inflexible, and alleged, as her reason, that she was convinced this privation would be a greater mortification to Miss Leslie, than any other she could condemn her to. Emily was, therefore, obliged to give up the point; and poor Maria had a long task, of several pages in her French grammar, given her first to copy three times over, and then to commit to memory, before the French girls and teachers returned from Mass.

The Protestants departed, and their conversation, during the walk, naturally turned on the new mode of punishment adopted by Madame d'Elfort.

"It is very shameful," said Anna Lushington, with more indignation than seemed consistent with her easy, indolent, and good-natured character. "But I am sure it is not of her own invention; I feel almost certain that it came first from Mademoiselle Mornay's suggestion."

"What makes you think so?" inquired Emily.

"Madame d'Elfort's general character and conduct," replied Anna. "She is too *dévôt* herself, and attaches too much importance to the performance of every religious duty, to wish to throw any impediment in the way of our doing the same. But does not that disagreeable Mornay always do everything she can to interfere with our religion?"

"That is true," said Emily, "but even Madame d'Elfort, kind and comparatively liberal as she is, cannot have many scruples on the subject; for, as she believes us to be under the influence of the most dangerous heresy, her conscience is more likely to approve than condemn any hindrance, which does not amount to a positive breach of her promised non-interference."

"Oh! yes," observed Lydia, "and that, I suppose, is the reason why we are always prevented from going to church whenever a cloud in the sky, a little wind, or any other pretext, can be found for detaining us at school. This is not the system she pursues for herself, nor would she suffer the French to stay away from their church for such trifling causes; for I heard her once tell you, Emily, that she would take them to mass even if it were raining stones from heaven."

"It is a matter of conscience with Madame d'Elfort," observed Caroline; "for her religion teaches her that it is a deadly sin to absent one's self from public worship, for any other cause than illness, or some very serious obstacle."

"They are very conscientious in the discharge of religious duties," remarked Eliza Kaimes, an interesting girl of thirteen; "I saw Madame d'Elfort, last winter, take the French girls to mass, at six o'clock, on a dreadfully inclement morning, when the snow was lying thick and deep on the ground. It was piercingly cold,

and so dark that they were obliged to carry small tapers in their hands to light them to the cathedral; and it struck me then that it would be well if we were all as zealous in the exercise of our religion as they are in theirs."

"You are right, my love," rejoined Emily, "they never once neglected the morning mass, whatever might be the inclemency of the weather; and their conduct in this, as well as in many other particulars, certainly holds out a most impressive lesson to us, who are blessed with the knowledge of a purer faith, and the possession of very superior advantages."

They were now arrived at the small English chapel, and the conversation ceased. On their return, they did not see Miss Leslie; but, on Emily's retiring to her room, one of the servants put into her hands the following note from that young lady:—

MY DEAR MISS MORTIMER,

I certainly fear that I am becoming a lunatic, and my folly involves me in numerous difficulties. I was this morning spending my time very quietly in your room, reading a sermon, and the church service. I went down to dinner, and was afterwards sent to finish copying my grammar, in the school-room; but, before I began, I went to carry my Prayer Book and Bible from your room into the small school-room, where the afternoon prayers are generally read. I had to pass through Miss Graham's chamber, and I observed a large blue-covered book, which excited my curiosity, and I carried it into the *classe*, to examine its title. Mademoiselle St. André came in, and immediately conveyed it to Madame d'Elfort; and now I am locked up for the rest of the day, because they say I had no right to touch the book, and that perhaps I intended to steal it, though I am sure I never had any such design. I do think the devil is constantly at my elbow, to lead me to do evil; but I wish he *could* have the *goodness* to let me alone. I am fully convinced how very wrong I am, but I may say an irresistible fate lures me to my destruction. Oh! my dear Miss Mortimer, when shall I adhere firmly to my resolutions, and become pious, virtuous, amiable, and accomplished? I fear never! for how often do I form good resolutions, and the next day they are vanished. I certainly am chaff,—only fit to be burned. Adieu, my dear Miss Mortimer; be assured of the gratitude of your affectionate

MARIA LESLIE.

P. S. By my own fault, I have most probably incurred the displeasure and dislike of Miss Graham. How bitter to think I have deserved it all! Will you tell her I am sensible of this, and that I solicit her forgiveness?

Emily was grieved on reading this strange, wild epistle, to find that the thoughtless writer had involved herself in fresh disgrace

with Madame d'Elfort ; though she could see nothing very criminal in the fault of which she had been guilty. It was evident that an insurmountable prejudice existed against her ; and, as it would have been useless to attempt any mitigation of her sentence, poor Miss Leslie remained in close confinement the whole of the day.

The next Sunday, soon after their return from chapel, several of the English girls ran up to Emily, to entreat her intercession in favor of the same unfortunate young lady.

"She has fallen into greater disgrace than even last Sunday," said Lydia. "She and one of the English day-scholars had, somehow, got possession of one of those little pictures which the French call *images*, and which are given to the younger children, as rewards for learning the popish catechism. It represented Saint Thérèse, with a cross in her hand, a glory round her head, and a number of angels clustering around her. The two girls amused themselves with laughing at it, and the day-scholar suggested that they should write something on the back of it. Maria Leslie, who is ever ready to do anything foolish, instantly caught at the idea, and wrote, 'St. Thérèse, you are as much a saint as I am.' And to this she had the madness to sign her name, and then left it somewhere in the school-room. Mademoiselle St. André has just found it, and you may imagine what a rage she is in. She has sent the culprit to her room, and declares, in spite of all our entreaties, that she will put the picture into Madame d'Elfort's hands, the moment she returns from church. You may guess that the result will be some dreadful punishment ; but it is not so much for her we care, for she deserves it, and her thoughtlessness is enough to put any one out of patience ; but we know that the mischief will not stop there. It will create a prejudice, in Madame d'Elfort's mind, against us all ; and we shall be exposed to more taunts and vexations than ever from the Roman Catholics. Do, Emily, go down and try to soften Mademoiselle St. André, or Miss Leslie's offence will be visited upon us all, by the loss of some of our privileges."

"Maria has, indeed, acted wrong," replied Emily, "for she had no right to cast insult on the religion of those with whom she resides, and if we wish the Romanists not to interfere with our faith, we must remember that it is our duty to show the same forbearance towards theirs. I am very loth to ask any favor of Mademoiselle St. André, for I know she dislikes me ; but I will endeavor to forget self, and see if I can persuade her not to mention the circumstance to Madame d'Elfort."

She was, however, completely unsuccessful in this attempt ; the teacher was, perhaps, not sorry to have an opportunity of mortifying her ; and she declared that her conscience would not allow of her passing over so great an insult in silence. The ut-

most consternation now reigned among the English; but their hopes were somewhat revived by the entrance of Madame d'Arblay. To this indulgent lady Emily immediately represented the case, acknowledging the impropriety of Miss Leslie's conduct, but entreating her intercession, to avert the consequences of Madame d'Elfort's displeasure. Madame d'Arblay was, at first, extremely indignant; but at length she consented to speak to Mademoiselle St. André. She requested her silence on the subject, as a personal favor to herself, and, as the teacher could not resist this plea, she reluctantly promised to spare Miss Leslie, on condition that she should write twelve French verbs, as a punishment for her offence.

The thoughtlessness of Maria Leslie that very evening drew upon her a severe reprimand from Madame d'Elfort, for having left her Bible in the dining-room. That lady took occasion, from this circumstance, to inform her Protestant pupils, that, as several of the French young ladies were learning English, she should consider those guilty of a serious offence who should leave their English Bibles within reach of any of them. French Bibles being strictly prohibited in the house, she had no fear of their reading such.

But poor Maria's heedlessness was almost incorrigible. She was in possession of a copy of Miss Kennedy's beautiful tale, entitled "Father Clement." Of this book she was extremely fond, and so indeed were all the other English girls. It was a great favorite with every one, and Emily felt thankful that it had been introduced into the school; for she believed that its striking exposure of Popish errors had, under the divine blessing, greatly contributed to diminish their influence on the minds of her school-fellows. This cherished book had hitherto been guarded, with the most jealous care, from the prying curiosity of the French; but Maria carelessly left hers in the *salon*, and Mademoiselle Mornay seized it. It was conveyed to Madame d'Elfort, who did not think proper to make any public observations on the subject, but the book never re-appeared; and the other girls carefully locked up theirs for safety.

They were returning from a walk, a few days after this, when they met another party of the scholars, who had gone to church with Madame d'Elfort. To Emily's surprise, they passed each other without speaking, or the slightest mark of recognition. Emily was going to address Rose, who glided past her with her eyes bent on the ground, when her arm was forcibly pulled by Anna Lushington, who, at the same time, placed her hand on her lips. As soon as the two parties had thus silently passed each other, Anna exclaimed in a whisper,

"What could you be thinking of, Emily? You have been very near exposing yourself to a tremendous reprimand, and tempting

poor Rose to commit a great sin. Do you not see that they are performing *stations*?"

"I don't know what you mean, Anna; pray explain yourself."

"What! you don't know what *stations* are? Then I must tell you, that you may not commit the same blunder again. The young ladies are under a vow, or engagement, to repeat a certain number of prayers at every church in the town, and other places specified. These are called *stations*, and they are bound not to utter a single word between each. Now, then, you see the motive of their silence, and what a dreadful crime it would have been to interrupt it."

"I do;—but, dear Anna, does not this remind you of the Pharisees, whom our Lord condemned, because they 'loved to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they might be seen of men?'"

Anna smiled at the question, without answering it, and with an expressive shrug of her graceful shoulders, fell back among her companions.

They had now reached the public *place*, or square of the town, when suddenly a procession of priests appeared, carrying the host with its accustomed pomp. An immediate halt was made, and the teachers, with the few Roman Catholics in the party, instantly fell on their knees. The English remained standing behind them, and Emily suddenly felt her hand grasped by some one. It was little Eliza Kaimes, whose pale cheek, and trembling limbs, betrayed a state of great nervous agitation. "Oh! save me, save me, dear Miss Mortimer!" she whispered. "That tyrannical Miss Mornay has been trying to make me kneel. I happened to be near her, and she pulled my frock so hard, that she almost dragged me down on my knees. I was so frightened, that I could scarcely resist; but I determined not to be guilty of idolatry, and I have at last succeeded in forcibly breaking from her, and running to you for protection."

Emily pressed the child's hand, and bade her be silent while the procession passed. When it had disappeared, Eliza expressed her fears, that Mademoiselle Mornay would punish her for disobedience; but Emily reassured her, by the promise of pleading her cause with Madame d'Elfort, if such should be the case. Mademoiselle Mornay, however, knew full well that her superior would not sanction any arbitrary exercise of power, on such an occasion; and, having failed to enforce obedience by a *coup de main*, she wisely let the subject drop into oblivion.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ENGLISH TEACHER.

One siner destroyeth much good.—ECCLES. ix. 18.

THERE were now about twenty English girls in the school, and another addition was made to their number, in the person of a little girl, six years old, the daughter of a distressed English family for whom a contribution had been made among their countrymen, some time before. The benevolent abbé Méry, who had already done much for them, now carried his generosity still farther, by taking on himself the care of this child, and placing her with Madame d'Elfort for her education.

As the *protégée* of a Roman Catholic priest, little Fanny Wilson was re-baptized in the cathedral (her former baptism being considered of no value whatever), and the name of Mary added to her own, in order to place her under the protection of the Virgin. She was, of course, immediately initiated into all the rites and observances of the Romish church, and made to learn its catechism, preparatory to her being introduced to auricular confession.

This catechism was regularly recited, and commented upon, once or twice every week, in the school-room; and, though the English girls were, of course, exempted from the necessity of learning it, yet care was taken that they should not lose the advantage of hearing all its doctrines. The time selected was in the afternoon, when all the pupils were seated at their needle-work, and when the silence in the school-room was so profound, that not one word was lost. The different questions and answers were explained with great care, and often enlarged upon, in a manner which, it was supposed, must triumph over all objections, so that the Protestant pupils, from this constant repetition, gradually became almost as familiar with Popish doctrines as the Roman Catholics themselves, and many of them insensibly fell into the habit of considering them as true, and occasionally referring to them as undoubted authority. The pernicious effects of this artful snare were also increased by a short lecture, which was read in the school-room every evening, while the young ladies were eating the bread and butter which was brought them as a *collation*, instead of tea, as the French are not in the habit of taking that meal. The books chosen for this purpose were always the lives of Popish saints, with all their miracles and absurdities, or treatises on the tenets of their church, with exhortations to the performance of the works it enjoins.

It was something new, and by no means agreeable to our Eng-

Nish girls, to see one of their own country in the house, conforming, in every respect, to the rules of the Romish church. They pitied the poor little creature, who was thus given up as an offering to an antichristian faith, though they could not blame the venerable *abbé* whose adoption of her displayed at once his benevolence and his zeal.

A circumstance now occurred, which seemed likely to exercise no little influence on the affairs of the English pupils. This was the departure of Miss Parker, the English teacher. This lady had never taken any interest in the welfare of her young countrywomen, and, never having seemed to belong to them, was but little, if at all, regretted by any of them. But a lively feeling of anxiety was excited, by the expectation of her successor; and, when the new teacher appeared, all eyes were directed towards her. Miss Bradford's appearance and manners were not very prepossessing; but Madame d'Elfort congratulated her English pupils, on their having now a teacher who would herself conduct them to church, and attend to their spiritual interests. Many an inquiring glance was directed towards Miss Bradford, at these words; but she had not been many days in the house, ere it was but too evident, that her principles and conduct were not such, as would be likely to promote the spiritual welfare of the young people committed to her charge. She knew nothing of vital religion, and was even lamentably indifferent about its outward forms. Emily saw that her example would be even more injurious than that of Miss Parker, and she wept with painful apprehension, at the evils which thus seemed thickening around this little flock in the wilderness.

Mrs. Anderson, the respectable woman who had hitherto escorted them to church, was now dismissed, and Miss Bradford marshalled her charge for divine service, on the following Sunday morning. But, alas! there was no devotion, no seriousness, and very little decorum, visible in her demeanor. She sat with her back to the minister, and, instead of kneeling, or even reading the church-service, employed herself in observing and criticising the dress, appearance, and manners, of the congregation. This conduct, it may be easily imagined, had the most pernicious effect on that of several of the young ladies, more particularly the younger ones. Mrs. Anderson had always been strict, in enforcing the utmost decency of behavior, and in this she had been greatly assisted by the example and influence of Emily and her friends; and so great had been the success which attended their endeavors, that the school had frequently been commended for the propriety of its conduct, by the minister and leading members of the congregation. But, alas! this beautiful picture was too soon reversed. The younger children now felt themselves authorized to be as inattentive as they pleased, and too many of the older ones

indulged their natural inclinations, by imitating the example of their teacher. And to so deplorable a height did this growing evil rise, that novels were sometimes read in the church, and a silent intercourse carried on by looks and signs, with some thoughtless young men of the congregation. It was in vain that Emily, and her more serious companions, remonstrated with these giddy girls; Emily's influence was now completely superseded, by the authority and example of the teacher. She, at length, felt it her duty to entreat Miss Bradford's interference. That lady either felt, or affected, surprise at what was evidently the consequence of her own inattention. She certainly had no desire that matters should be carried so far, and she angrily reprimanded the culprits for their breach of decorum, positively declaring, that a repetition of such conduct should be reported to Madame d'Elfort. But, as she neither altered her own behavior, nor exercised more watchfulness over that of the others, the same evils continued to exist, though they were now accompanied with rather more caution.

Oh! how did the hearts of the serious little party mourn over this fearful change, which, like a desolating pestilence, had thus withered the moral beauty of their once promising garden! And these painful feelings were not less excited, by the melancholy change in their formerly delightful afternoon services. Emily had, as a matter of course, resigned the direction of these to Miss Bradford; and they were now carried on in a manner that was shocking to every serious and correct feeling. The evening prayers were indeed read, but with so little of even the appearance of devotion, that they were finished in half the time they ought to have occupied. The New Testament was then read, but in so hasty and irreverent a manner, that five or six chapters were hurried over in a quarter of an hour; and then, to finish the hour appointed for their service, the Church Catechism was repeated, with the same revolting disregard to its importance. No more questions asked, or answers given on the solemn subjects connected with their reading; no more serious and interesting conversation, on the sacred truths of the gospel; no more of the sweet intercourse that made religion pleasant, or the beautiful hymns that threw a hallowed charm over those once happy meetings. Miss Bradford was an avowed enemy to everything serious; she reprobated it as hypocrisy, and ridiculed it under the hackneyed name of Methodism.

The link that bound the English together seemed now, in a great measure, broken; they were no longer like an affectionate sisterhood, endeared to each other by a community of feelings, interests, and pursuits. A few, indeed, still remained faithful to their principles, and among this number were (besides the cousins) Helen Douglas, Louisa Selwyn, and Eliza Kaines; nay,

their affection for each other, and attachment to their former privileges, increased in proportion to the coldness, indifference, and estrangement, of others. But sad indeed was the change, which a few weeks of Miss Bradford's rule produced on the once quiet, orderly, and serious circle. It brought into full exercise every evil propensity of the carnal mind, which had before been, in a great degree, awed into subjection by the authority tacitly accorded to Emily; and many a thoughtless girl, who had hitherto, partly from shame, and partly from the silent influence of good example, preserved a tolerably correct demeanor, now felt authorized to shake off these disagreeable restraints, and to follow a path more congenial to her natural inclinations. Their misbehavior, during the Sunday afternoon prayers, was at length carried so far, as to annoy even Miss Bradford, and rouse her to utter reprimands which were only laughed at, and threats of complaining to Madame d'Elfort, which, as she never executed them, were equally disregarded.

This contempt of her authority excited her utmost indignation, and she loudly declared, that the young ladies were the worst behaved and most troublesome pupils she had ever known, complaining, at the same time, that they made her life miserable. On this occasion, Emily attempted to convince her, that the evil arose chiefly from the defects of her system. She assured her that if they read but one chapter, and did it in a more deliberate and serious manner, it would be far more likely to produce a beneficial effect on their minds; that their attention might be fixed and their feelings interested, by simple questions, or familiar explanations, introduced in the way of conversation. She alluded to the favorable results of this practice, as existing before Miss Bradford's arrival; and though she was careful not to say anything which could imply a censure of the teacher's conduct, she endeavored to excite an interest in the welfare of the children, which, she hoped, might, with the divine blessing, be productive of a gradual improvement in Miss Bradford's views and feelings. But she soon found that, in venturing thus to advise, she had reckoned too confidently on that lady's good sense and candor. Miss Bradford at first ridiculed her suggestions; and, when Emily's anxiety led her to press the subject still more closely on her attention, she was offended at what she called her interference, and declared she would not be dictated to. Emily, therefore, was compelled to abandon all hope of improvement in the system, and bitterly did she weep over the sad change which had thus taken place.

Nor was she the only one who lamented the present state of things. All the more reflecting girls were shocked at this want of common decorum, in the performance of every religious duty, and acknowledged, that their feelings revolted against the heart-

less indifference of Miss Bradford. To such a height, indeed, was this apathy carried, that the Sunday, which had formerly been the most delightful day of the week, the green oasis in the wilderness, to which many an eye was turned with longing expectation, was now become a day of the most painful interest to some, and of no interest at all to others. Emily's feelings of sorrow were so acute, that she was glad to fly from a scene she could not bear, by accepting the kind invitation of some English friends in town, and spending the Sunday at their house. Caroline and Lydia accompanied her, and happy indeed did they esteem themselves, in being thus favored with an opportunity of enjoying a quiet and Sabbath-like afternoon.

Major and Mrs. Fortescue were amiable, excellent, and serious people, and their extreme kindness to the cousins excited their liveliest gratitude. Their house had ever been a pleasant resort to them, but now it was an ark of refuge, from the overwhelming feelings of regret for past enjoyments, and disgust at the want of everything like devotion, in the hallowed services they had so long looked forward to with reverence and delight.

They had thus absented themselves for two or three Sundays, when several young ladies of their former circle complained loudly of their desertion.

"Indeed, indeed, Miss Mortimer," said Helen Douglas, "it is scarcely kind of you to leave us thus. We wander about the house, like discontented ghosts, not knowing what to do with ourselves. We have no friend to direct us now, to comfort us in our troubles, or to warn us against the snares and dangers that surround us. I know it must be painful for you to remain; but your presence and counsel might counteract some of the evils to which we are exposed, and help us to guard against the treachery of our own hearts.

"Dear Helen, perhaps you are right, but it is very distressing to witness the desecration of the Sunday afternoon."

"It is indeed," said Louisa, with a deep sigh; "and yet I assure you, you have not seen the worst of it."

"Oh! no," observed Rosa Maxwell, an amiable and well-disposed young lady, who was a recently arrived parlor boarder, "you can scarcely form an idea of what the scene was yesterday. It was quite enough to shock and disgust any reflecting mind. Miss Bradford was, if possible, more reckless than ever, and the children were dreadful troublesome. Agnes Beverley and Charlotte Barton burst into repeated fits of laughter, during the reading; and Fanny Gordon, Anna Lushington, and several others, who, from their age, ought to have behaved better, were not a whit more attentive. Amelia Cooper and Mary Hyde had a long lesson of geography to copy for this morning, and they persuaded Miss Bradford to let them write it, instead of joining in the

prayers. We read the whole of the two epistles to the Thessalonians, in about twenty minutes; Miss Bradford then asked, if we would repeat the Catechism; the majority consented, but Maria Lushington, and several others, when it came to their turns, refused, without alleging any other reason than that it was not their pleasure to repeat it. Such behavior I never saw, and Miss Bradford, instead of being provoked, merely shrugged her shoulders, and said, 'Do as you like!' I could not help saying to her, that I thought she ought to tell Madame d'Elfort how ill they behaved; and what do you suppose was her answer? 'I will tell her, Miss Maxwell, if they behave ill again; but as to their religious instruction, it is no affair of mine. I am not *paid* for teaching them religion, nor did I engage to do it. If they attend to their religious duties, so much the better: but if they will not, they may do as they please.'

"Oh! Miss Mortimer!" exclaimed Eliza Kaimes, "when will those happy Sundays return, that we used to spend with you? Miss Bradford calls you a hypocrite and a meddler, but she does not care for our souls, as you do. But, pray, do not leave us again so forlorn and disconsolate; for it is some comfort to have you near to speak to."

Emily could only weep, and press the dear girl in her arms; she thought of these helpless sheep in the wilderness, and earnestly prayed the Great Shepherd to have compassion on them.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE COUNTRY PARTY.

Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.—PSALM I. 15.

MADAME D'ELFORT had long promised her young ladies the pleasure of a pic-nic party, and was only waiting for a fine holiday, to fulfil her promise. The following Thursday was now fixed upon for that purpose, and many were the wishes for favorable weather on that important occasion. The young people, with that eagerness of anticipation peculiar to their age, could scarcely talk, or even think, of anything else for more than a week beforehand, and the eve of the long-wished-for day was employed in

numerous little preparations, and numberless conjectures on the probable state of the atmosphere on the morrow. The opinions were various; but two or three of the French girls positively affirmed that the weather would be delightful, and, on being asked to give their reasons for this assertion, replied, that they had, for the last three days, repeated three *Ave Marias* and three *Pater Nosters*, in order to obtain that favor from the Virgin. A general smile was visible on the countenances of the English, as they listened to this declaration; but Lydia observed to Emily, that she thought this instance of mistaken devotion ought to remind them of the apostle's injunction—"In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God!"

Emily assented, and the conversation then turned on the death of a priest, which had taken place in the morning. He was to be buried the next day and was then lying in state, dressed in his splendid sacerdotal costume, with a crucifix in one hand, and a mass book in the other, as if he were just going to celebrate that pompous rite of the Romish church. Mademoiselle St. André had promised to take a few of the young ladies to witness the sight, and Rose de Liancourt now invited Emily to join them. This, however, she declined; for, to her apprehension, there was something horrible and revolting, in the idea of thus decking out a corpse in the habiliments and attributes of the living. Caroline, however, went, and so did a few others of the English, who, on their return, related that the dead body was placed in a sitting posture, and that Caroline had been so shocked at the sight, that she had nearly fainted. Emily immediately went up to her; but she was in close conversation with Sophia Dorville, and with a sinking heart, the friend of her childhood retreated from the room.

The next morning arose with unclouded splendor, and the triumphant looks of the French devotees seemed to appeal to the success of their *paters* and *aves*, as an undeniable proof of the truth of their religion. All was bustle and joyful preparation in the house. The scene of their expected enjoyment was the estate of a nobleman, about four leagues from the town, and remarkable for its picturesque views, and beautiful woods and pleasure-grounds. Their mode of conveyance consisted of five light vans, called *chars-à-banc*, furnished with stuffed seats for the convenience of travellers, and driven by four men and one woman, of no very prepossessing appearance.

The whole party set out about nine o'clock, as they had to walk to the outskirts of the town, where they were to take possession of their clumsy vehicles. They were met on the road by the funeral procession of the deceased priest, which was proceeding to the cathedral. The corpse was carried in an open coffin, with the face and hands uncovered. Madame d'Elfort immediately

stopped, and all the Roman Catholics joined her in making the sign of the cross, and repeating, in a low voice, a prayer for the dead. The most profound silence prevailed among them, for some time after they had lost sight of the *cortège*; and before it was interrupted, their attention was again attracted by another memento of mortality. At the door of a small house was placed a child's coffin, and near it stood a basin of holy water. Every Roman Catholic, on passing it, dipped her finger in the water, and, after crossing herself, sprinkled a few drops on the coffin, muttering a prayer at the same time. A woman, who sat by the coffin, observing that Emily passed without complying with this necessary ceremony, darted at her a look of furious indignation, and exclaimed, "You are not a well-wisher to the soul of the innocent." The whole party passed on, and soon arrived at the place where the *chars-à-banc* were waiting for them.

Their journey was a pleasant one, and they were much delighted with the beautiful seat of the Marquis of C—. They wandered all the morning through its picturesque grounds, chased each other through the lovely solitudes of the wood, in all the wild and buoyant enjoyment of youthful liberty, or danced in merry groups on the green, sloping lawns. After taking their dinner, seated on the grass, beneath the shade of some beautiful old trees, Emily, Lydia, Helen, and Louisa, fatigued with the morning's exercise, quietly wandered along the side of the lake, and resolved to examine the immediate precincts of the *château*, and the little rural village that surrounded it. One of the first things that struck them was a small chapel, belonging to the castle, at the end of an avenue of noble trees. Two statues, the one representing a friar, the other a nun, stood at each side of the entrance. Through a small window near the door, they obtained a view of the interior, which was richly ornamented, and the altar covered with a profusion of silver candlesticks, goblets, and vases. There were also some beautiful looking paintings; but of these they could not judge, as a nearer view was denied them, the chapel having been shut up, and never used since the death of the Marchioness,—an event which was said to have deeply affected her noble husband.

Our young friends now entered the village, and resolved to examine its small, antique-looking church. In passing through the church-yard, they were much shocked by the sight of two spaces, inclosed on each side of the back door, and filled with human bones, whitening in the air. They turned, with an involuntary shudder, from these miniature charnel-houses, and entered the church, which, like all Roman Catholic places of worship, was always open during the day. Its interior was of a very simple and unpretending character, with but few attempts at ornament, and those of the rudest kind. The friends sat down in front of its

ancient altar, and Lydia proposed that they should read aloud a chapter from the Bible.

"These old walls," she said, "have never echoed to the sound of the gospel; let its sacred voice now be heard within them. There is, to me, something delightful in the idea. Do, Emily, lend me your pocket-bible."

The whole party smiled at this fanciful suggestion; but it was not opposed; and Lydia read aloud the fourth chapter of the first epistle to Timothy, in which the hand of inspiration has briefly sketched some of the distinguishing features of the Romish apostasy. She then turned to the eighth of the Romans, and read also that beautiful exposition of sacred truth and Christian privileges. Her auditors were rapt in silent awe, for there was a feeling of melancholy, yet elevating solemnity, connected with the sound of the gospel in that spot. It struck on their hearts like the voice of an accusing witness, and painful was the conviction, that every word uttered was a sentence of fearful condemnation against the false and soul-deluding religion whose idolatrous rites were daily performed in that place.

Lydia finished her reading, and exclaimed, as she rose from her rude seat,

"Well, Emily, the gospel has now been heard within this ancient pile, and heard, I suppose for the first time, in its pure and unmixed simplicity. What would the village-priest say, could he know what we have been doing? I presume he would think the inquisition itself scarcely sufficient punishment for our temerity. But the time may come, when the gospel shall again resound, even amidst these time-honored walls."

"And the time will *certainly come*," replied Emily, "when that blessed gospel shall triumph over all the delusions of Popery, and every other error; for 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.'"

They now left the church, and rejoined their party, some of whom were amusing themselves on the lawn, while others were exploring the devious windings of a beautiful little labyrinth. After a collation under the trees, Madame d'Elfort assembled all her company together, and led them away from the grounds, to examine an ancient fortification in the neighborhood. The *chairs-à-banc* were to take them up at this spot; but what was the consternation of the governess, and the terror of the pupils, when it became but too evident to every one that the drivers were, without one single exception, in a state of most alarming inebriety! Emily had been requested, in the morning, to take charge of the young ladies in her vehicle; but she now trembled at the responsibility of the task, with a drunken woman for their charioteer.

To add to her agitation, almost all the English girls crowded round her, tumultuously declaring that they dreaded the danger

of the journey with such conductors, and that they would go in no vehicle but Miss Mortimer's. Emily felt that there was, in fact, considerable hazard in the *trajet*, for they had to pass a narrow bridge over a river, with no railings or parapet on either side; it was already becoming dusk, and the night must close in, long before they could reach the town; and, to add to the danger, their way lay across a part of the sea-shore, which was perfectly safe at low water, but rendered peculiarly perilous by the rapid and violent return of the tide. The passage might, indeed, be avoided, by taking a circuitous route; but their drivers were not in a state, either to judge of the practicability of passing the water, or listen to the suggestions of prudence, by taking the longest road. The Protestant girls, in their terror, clung to Emily, with that instinctive trust, which even the most careless and unthinking always feel, in one whom they think more pious than themselves. They all considered Emily as a Christian,—a child of God; and, though some of them might often ridicule her, as being "righteous over-much," they considered themselves much safer with her, than with any one else. Thus it is that the world often pays an involuntary homage to Christian principle, and that the "still small voice" of conscience bears an undeniable testimony to the blessedness and security of the Christian.

It was impossible, however, for Emily to take all the applicants into her *charrette*; and Madame d'Elfort, anxious to depart, hurried them into different vehicles, with an authority that was not to be resisted. By this arrangement, two French girls were left to Emily, besides five English, among whom were Lydia, Helen, and Eliza Kaimes. Their journey was anything but agreeable, owing to the insane freaks of their female driver. Twenty times did they see themselves on the point of being overturned, and the screams of the terrified girls completely bewildered Emily. She had the greatest trouble to prevent their springing out, which, under existing circumstances, would have been highly perilous. They had been galloping at such a rate, that they were now nearly a mile from the rest of the party; and Emily, feeling thus uncountenanced and unprotected, in a situation which threatened every moment to be productive of some serious accident, became so nervous and agitated, that it was only by a strong effort, accompanied by fervent mental prayer for divine support and direction, that she was enabled to recover some degree of self-possession. In vain did she speak to the unhappy woman, and entreat her to moderate her speed, that the others might rejoin them: the madness of intoxication, and the desire to show the superiority of her horse and her driving, rendered her insensible to all remonstrances.

It is needless to say, that Emily was greatly alarmed, and even more so on account of her companions than herself. The terror of some of these poor girls amounted to agony, and, with the na-

tural impulse of an awakened conscience, they had recourse, to calling upon God. Emily, in the midst of her agitation, could not but remark the volubility with which the two French girls were repeating their Latin orisons. She heard Louisa Belville ask her companion, "How many *paters* and *aves* she had said?" "Fourteen;" answered Amélie de Brisac. "And I sixteen," rejoined Louise; upon which they both resumed, with increased rapidity those "vain repetitions" which the God they sought to propitiate has so expressly forbidden. Emily thought of the inspired declaration of Isaiah,—“Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.” One or two of the English girls were also earnestly, though more quietly, engaged in repeating the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, and seemed as unconscious that the latter was not a petition, as the others were that the words they uttered in an unknown tongue could not constitute prayer. She glanced at Helen and Lydia who sat on each side of her. They were pale, but calm, and their upraised eyes spoke of fervent, though silent supplication.

They now approached that part of the road which crossed the narrow bridge, and Emily could not repress a shudder. Those who sat behind could not see the dangerous pass, owing to the *chairs-à-banc* being covered, and the night having already closed in; and an expressive glance from Emily told her two friends that it was necessary to keep this knowledge from the others, who would certainly, in the frenzy of their terror, have jumped out, in spite of all remonstrance; an action which would, almost inevitably, have been attended with dreadful consequences, as they could only get out in front, and the furious speed at which they were driven rendered such an attempt perilous to the last degree. Emily laid her hand on the arm of the wretched woman, and, in a low voice, implored her to moderate her horse's pace, at least till they had passed the bridge. A wild laugh, however, was her only answer, and she lashed the poor animal, with frantic violence, to increase its speed. A look of unutterable meaning was exchanged between the three friends; not a word was spoken, but their arms were linked in each other, with almost the energy of a death-clasp; and not a breath was drawn, till they had been whirled, with frightful rapidity, but still without any accident, across the dreaded bridge.

A mutual embrace, mingled with tears of gratitude and rapture, was the first expression of their feelings, at this providential escape; but Emily's anxiety and agitation had been so intense, that she was now completely exhausted, and laying her head on Lydia's shoulder, to still its agonized throbbings, she closed her eyes in a kind of half swoon.

In the meantime, the over-fatigued horse had stopped, in spite

of his infuriated driver, and no blows could induce him to proceed. This favorable circumstance enabled the other vehicles to come up with them, and Madame d'Elfort's uneasiness was relieved, by the assurance that they had sustained no injury. Their troubles, however, were not yet ended, for three of the drivers now began to quarrel and fight among themselves, and the frantic woman, whom intoxication had rendered more ungovernable than the men, after disfiguring with her nails the face of one antagonist, in utter disregard of all attempts to stop the fray, completed her triumph, as she thought, by applying the whip to the back of her exhausted horse, and compelling it to resume its former gallop with the same insensate fury. The terror of the poor girls was almost as great as before; but the eye of a merciful Providence watched over their safety; and though the wretched woman, in defiance of their renewed entreaties, refused to take the safe, circuitous road, which led to the gates of S—, and dashed, with reckless temerity, and in the dark, across the dangerous beach, their alarm was dissipated by observing that the tide, though rather higher than they could have wished, was not sufficiently so to impede their passage. The other drivers followed the example, and the party at length found themselves safely deposited at Madame d'Elfort's gate, after a day in which enjoyment had been dearly paid for, by the most intense anxiety, and terror. Madame d'Elfort was ill the next day, from the uneasiness she had endured; and it was some time before, Emily could recover from the nervous excitement, produced by her over-wrought feelings.

CHAPTER XXV.

SUNDAY TRIALS.

If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.—1 PETER iii. 14.

SEVERAL of the Roman Catholic boarders were preparing to attend the celebration of the Eucharist, and Rose, who was among the number, seemed now more reserved, and, at the same time, more dejected, than Emily had ever yet seen her. Her sympathy for this amiable girl was of the tenderest kind, and Rose's affection for her was in nowise diminished; but a seal, a painful seal was on

the lips of both, and their conversations insensibly became less and less frequent.

Emily was walking in the garden, engaged in lonely musing, when she found herself unexpectedly close to her friend, who was sitting alone at work in one of the arbors. It was impossible not to say something, and she approached, and greeted her with an affectionate smile. Rose replied to it by a silent embrace, but her eyes were full of tears. Emily did not venture to inquire their cause, but, fixing her eyes on her friend's work,—a pretty, simple, French cap, which she was tastefully ornamenting with white ribbons, she asked, without well knowing what she said, for what purpose it was intended?

"To wear at the holy communion," replied Rose. "I presume you are aware that we take off our bonnets."

"No," replied Emily, "I did not know it; but tell me, dear Rose, do you receive the sacrament as many together as can kneel around the altar, as we Protestants do, and as the children did at the *première communion*; or is any other arrangement adopted, in ordinary cases?"

"I cannot tell you, Miss Mortimer."

"Cannot!—will you allow me to ask why?"

"You know we must not converse on the subject of religion," observed Rose, evidently doing violence to her feelings.

"But my question, dear Rose, relates only to a matter of outward form; it was simply dictated by curiosity, and certainly involves no doctrine of your church."

"Perhaps not, Emily, but I must not talk with you on any subject which is connected with religion, even in the remotest degree. I am forbidden to do so."

"You astonish me, Rose! from whom can so unreasonable a prohibition come?"

"Ask me no questions, I entreat you, my dear, dear friend; for I cannot answer them, and you do not know how painful it is to me to refuse you."

As Rose uttered these words, she took up her work, and, with a countenance expressive of the most touching sorrow, walked slowly away, and re-entered the house. Emily, of course, did not attempt to follow her, but she heaved a bitter sigh of regret and disappointment, and mentally breathed a prayer for her afflicted friend. It was evident that Rose's conscientious discharge of whatever she had been taught to consider a duty, had led her to acquaint her confessor with every particular of their friendly intercourse, and every conversation which had occurred between them; and the priest, with the jealous circumspection enjoined by his principles, had thought it necessary to guard his young charge against danger, by exerting his authority, and restricting their intimacy within the narrowest possible bounds.

The next day was the Sabbath, and, to gratify her friends, Emily remained at school during the afternoon; but her spirits were deeply affected by the total want of even common decorum, in the behavior of both Miss Bradford and too many of her pupils, during the time allotted for their devotions. Her heart sickened, when she saw, in one corner of the room, a group engaged in study, while others were struggling to keep their attention fixed on the prayers, which every now and then interrupted by the scarcely-suppressed laughter of one, or the whispering observations of another. It was still worse, during the repetition of the catechism, and Miss Bradford at length dismissed the party before the expiration of the hour, with the usual threat of informing Madame d'Elfort, which was as little regarded as before.

The young ladies descended to the garden, but a few of them gathered round Emily, and again expressed their regret, at the painful change in their once-delightful Sunday afternoon service.

"I never witnessed anything so scandalous," observed Miss Maxwell, with indignation. "I certainly have seen the French girls look around them, while running over their unmeaning repetitions, and even listen to, and sometimes join in, the conversation that was going on in the room; but I should never have expected to see Protestants, who have been taught that prayer is something more than counting beads, and repeating words, behave in so a disgraceful manner."

"How thankful I am," exclaimed Lydia, "that my stay in this place will now be very short, and that papa will soon come to fetch us away."

These words were scarcely uttered, when Lydia felt the pressure of a hand on her arm, and, turning round, she beheld the soft hazel eyes of Helen fixed on her countenance, with a look of tender reproach.

"How can you rejoice at your approaching departure, dearest Lydia, when you know that we shall then lose all the Christian society we are now favored with, and shall then have no one to advise or direct us in the right path? When you and Miss Mortimer are gone, Louisa will be the only serious friend I shall have here; but she is going away in two months, and then your poor Helen will indeed be left desolate!"

"My beloved Helen!" exclaimed Lydia, straining the sweet girl to her heart, and affectionately kissing her tearful cheek, "forgive me, I beseech you, if my joy appears selfish; but even you cannot imagine how impatiently, how passionately I long to leave this detestable place. I have a presentiment,—perhaps a foolish one,—that some misfortune will result from our residence here; but oh! how fervently do I wish that both you and Louisa could depart with us!"

"My dear Helen," said Emily, approaching, and taking her hand,

"do not forget that you have in Jesus 'a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.' 'He will never leave you nor forsake you;' and you may confidently rely upon His protection, His tenderness, and His love."

Helen threw herself on Emily's neck, and wept silently and bitterly. Her heart was overwhelmed with sorrow, and she could not then realize the comfort of the promise. But it was now necessary to separate, and, wiping the tears from her eyes, she reluctantly joined the noisy groups in the garden.

The annual distribution of prizes was approaching, and she had been selected, with several others, to sing a grand chorus on that important occasion. Madame d'Elfort had never yet heard it, and she now called them up, and requested them to sing it before her. They obeyed, and ranged themselves in a semicircle round their governess. Her quick-eye however, soon perceived the absence of one, and she inquired where Miss Douglas was? Helen had kept her seat, at a little distance, but her changing color betrayed the agitation of her feelings. She was immediately pointed out to Madame d'Elfort, and Mademoiselle St. André approached, and reiterated that lady's commands. Helen, timid, confused, and gasping for breath, had scarce power to answer; but the strong feeling of duty, and the consciousness that she was acting right, upheld her. She rose, and walked up to Madame d'Elfort, who, with a stern and displeased countenance, commanded her to take her place among the singers. Poor Helen's courage nearly forsook her, under that angry look; but she remembered the Saviour's awful denunciation against those who should be ashamed of Him, and, at length, with a violent effort, addressed her governess,

"Have the goodness, I beseech you, Madame, to excuse me, for I cannot conscientiously sing anything but sacred music on the Sunday."

The crimson glow of anger and offended dignity instantly flushed the face of Madame d'Elfort; her brow contracted into a terrible frown, and, with a majestic wave of her hand, she motioned Helen to retire. The trembling girl obeyed, and sank, almost fainting, against a tree. The chorus was sung by the other young ladies, and commended by their governess; but some of the English girls felt that Helen had acted right, though they trembled for her, and would not have dared to imitate her temerity.

Mesdemoiselles Mornay and St. André remained in close conversation with Madame d'Elfort, who seemed much incensed at Helen's resistance; and the latter was evidently desirous of irritating her against Emily, whom she represented as the sole cause of her opposition to her wishes. In this she partially succeeded; for Madame d'Elfort again sent for the offender, and thus addressed her,—

"I shall not say, Mademoiselle Douglas, how much I have been

surprised at your disobedience this day. You have reason to expect the punishment your conduct deserves; but you have assigned a scruple of conscience as your motive, and I respect the plea. I am fully convinced, however, that even your religion does not require such singularity of conduct,—else, why should not all your fellow-Protestants be equally scrupulous? I know by whose influence it is, that these false principles have obtained an ascendancy over the minds of several of my pupils; but I shall take care that such counsels be no longer given, nor such interference again take place. And you may now withdraw.”

Pale, cold, and trembling, Helen tottered from the spot, and hastened, as well as she was able, to warn Emily of the displeasure which she had thus involuntarily drawn upon her. But this intelligence had already been communicated to her by one or two of the young ladies, who had contrived to slip away, as soon as Madame d'Elfort's tremendous lecture was uttered. Emily was certainly not unmoved by the storm which seemed ready to burst on her head; but though her governess's displeasure was a matter of no trifling importance, in a place where every one stood in awe of her lightest word, she yet felt that the God she served would assuredly sustain her in the trial; and her mind recurred with confidence to that triumphant question of the apostle, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” See was, therefore, enabled to comfort Helen, whose distress and agitation had found relief in a flood of tears, and to remind her of the inspired declaration, “If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye.”

But poor Helen's feelings had been too highly excited to be easily calmed, and a violent nervous headache compelled her to go to bed immediately. Emily's emotion was extreme, in the prospect of the dreaded conference with Madame d'Elfort, and she fancied every step that approached the room was hers. She had recourse to prayer, for divine support in this trying exigency; but, though she felt re-assured, and strengthened with a renewed sense of confidence in her heavenly Father, she found it impossible to repress entirely the involuntary tremors of nervous agitation.

These terrors, however, were altogether superfluous, for, when Madame d'Elfort's anger was cooled by reflection, she felt the injustice, as well as impolicy, of interfering with the religious principles of any of her pupils; and her respect for consistency increased the good opinion she had always entertained of Emily and Helen. She, therefore, met them on the morrow with even more than her wonted kindness of manner; and the storm which threatened their tranquillity was succeeded by sunshine.

But a cloud of deeper gloom was now about to burst over the heads of Emily and her cousins. A packet came from Mr. Mortimer, addressed to Madame d'Elfort, and enclosing letters for Caroline, Lydia, and Emily. These epistles contained the melan-

choly intelligence of the death of Mrs. Howard, in a manner as sudden as it was distressing. The painful truth was communicated by Madame d'Elfort, with the utmost sympathy and tenderness. But what precaution can blunt the anguish occasioned by the loss of a mother,—a kind, affectionate, invaluable mother? Lydia's grief was deep, intense, and lasting; but Caroline's agony completely overwhelmed her. It brought on a fit of illness, from which she did not recover for some weeks. Emily suffered too, for she had loved her aunt fondly and sincerely; but she was enabled to subdue her grief, and exerted herself with earnestness to comfort her afflicted cousins. They listened, with tearful attention, to the sweet voice of gospel consolation; but, while Lydia received it with humility and thankfulness, Caroline's heart seemed closed against its soothing and hope-inspiring accents. She evidently desired the society of Sophia Dorville, more than that of her sister or cousin; yet the gloomy despondency of her mind was in nowise relieved by their frequent conversations. At length, however, she resumed her scholastic duties, and seemed to look forward with pleasure to the arrival of her father, who had announced it as his intention to spend some time in France for the restoration of his health, which had been much impaired by his grief for the loss of a beloved wife, and to bring with him her two younger sisters, whom he intended to place at school.

Major and Mrs. Fortescue, with their usual kindness, frequently invited the cousins to their house, and used every exertion to cheer them. They were allowed to spend two or three days with these estimable friends; and Mrs. Fortescue, thinking it would amuse Caroline, took them with her to pay a visit to a convent in the neighborhood of S——. It was situated in the centre of a large inclosed space, and approached by a large avenue of trees. They entered a wide Gothic porch, and pulled the string of a bell which hung at the side of an inner door. There was a small square grating in that door, and a shutter which closed it on the inside being slipped back, the head and veil of a nun appeared, and they were asked their business. Mrs. Fortescue inquired for *la mère Sainte Euphrasie*, and the portress then requested them to enter the parlor on the right hand. The door, however, was shut, and the young people looked round for some one to open it. They were not long kept in suspense; a spring was touched from inside, and the door flew open to admit them. They entered, and seated themselves close to a double iron grating, which divided the small apartment into two equal parts. They had not waited long, when the nun they asked for made her appearance on the other side. She was a middle-aged woman, of prepossessing appearance, and the eyes of the cousins were instantly riveted upon her, with as intense a gaze as politeness would allow. Her dress consisted of a very long and full black woollen robe, confined at the waist by a

leathern girdle, a white apron, a broad collar falling over the bosom, and a close cap, from which a long black veil descended even to the feet. It was thrown back from her face, which, however, was almost concealed by a broad linen *bandeau*, which covered the forehead, and was then brought round the chin, in a manner that gave her almost the appearance of a corpse. From her girdle depended a long black rosary, to which was attached a cross.

Her address was graceful, and her manners and conversation peculiarly polished. She spoke to Mrs. Fortescue, as to an old friend, and to the young people with winning suavity. She inquired how they would like a convent life, and, on their expressing a great dislike to it, assured them that they were under the influence of prejudice, for that it was, in reality, a life of serene uninterrupted happiness. She spoke eloquently on that subject, and her apparent cheerfulness certainly seemed to corroborate her statement.

Mrs. Fortescue requested to see some specimens of fancy-work, as she intended to make a few purchases; and the sister immediately gave directions to that effect. A great number and variety of beautiful and ingenious articles, the work of the sisterhood, were exhibited, and the visitors purchased several. Sister Sainte Euphrasie then offered to show them an altar-cloth, which some of the nuns were embroidering for their chapel. This offer being accepted, the inner door of the convent was opened, and two young nuns appeared at it, holding between them a frame on which was displayed a superb piece of embroidery, elegantly wrought in gold and silver thread, intermixed with silk of different colors. The visitors admired it, and then took their leave: but the cousins cast back many a look of mingled curiosity and interest, at the frowning walls of the convent, which enclosed so large a number of deluded human beings, formed for the duties and the enjoyments of social life, yet condemned, by the fatal influence of an unscriptural system of "will-worship," to waste their youth, their energies, and their whole existence, in the gloomy and useless solitude of a cloister. There was something exceedingly painful in these reflections; and this feeling was not diminished by the information which Caroline now communicated,—that her friend, Sophia Dorville, was resolved to become a nun as soon as her education was finished.

"Would to God," whispered Lydia to her cousin, "that Sophia had not so much influence over the mind of Caroline! I cannot help dreading the consequences of their intimacy."

Emily only replied by an expressive pressure of the hand; but Lydia felt that she was understood, and her sentiments sympathized in.

CHAPTER XXVI.

TRUE FRIENDSHIP.

To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.—PSALM I. 23.

EMILY was quietly seated in her room, her attention deeply absorbed by an Italian book, which her master had recommended for her perusal, when a light but hurried tap at her door, made her start, and she was surprised by the entrance of Rose. Her face was pale, and her eyes red with weeping. She sat down by her friend, and for some time neither of them spoke. At length Rose gasped out,

"My dear, dear Emily, I am come to bid you farewell! My father has sent for me, and he vows I shall not return to school. I shall be fetched in an hour, and I wish to spend this last hour with you. Perhaps we may never meet again!"

She threw her arms round Emily's neck, and wept in silent, but deep and heartfelt anguish. Emily could not repress her own emotion, and her tears mingled plentifully with those of her friend.

At length Rose raised herself from her disconsolate attitude, and exclaimed, with unwonted energy,

"I can bear this constraint no longer. Perhaps I am wrong, in speaking to you on a subject which has long weighed heavily on my heart; I know I am transgressing the orders of those I ought to obey; but I feel, at this moment, that I cannot be silent any longer. The distressing necessity of parting from you,—perhaps for ever, obliges me now to speak openly. Allow me then, my dear friend, to ask you a most important question. Have you any intention of becoming a Catholic?"

"I, my dearest Rose! Certainly not! But you surprise me,—what could possibly lead you to think I had any such intention?"

"I scarcely know," answered Rose, while her countenance assumed an expression of disappointment and dejection, "but as you have often visited our churches, hospitals, and convents, I thought . . . I hoped," she added with a faltering voice, "that some of the *religieuses* might have been the means of converting you."

"My doing so has been chiefly owing to curiosity, and the interest naturally inspired by institutions so widely different from all I have before been accustomed to; but I assure you that, far from being a convert to your religion, everything I have seen and heard has only tended to confirm my sentiments."

A slight shade of vexation,—almost of impatience,—crossed the pale, pensive brow of Rose, as she exclaimed,

"How dreadful! how distressing! Yet, if you would but examine the subject with attention, you might change your opinion. But I forget, perhaps you are not free to do so; perhaps your parents might be seriously displeased, were you to change your religion. Are you quite sure they would not?"

"I cannot answer that question, dear Rose; but why should I seek for information on a subject about which I have not the slightest doubt?"

"Yet if you would but inquire! Is it not possible that you may be in error? Oh! believe me, you are!"

Hush, my dearest Rose! I fear we may be overheard. Is not Mademoiselle de Blangy in the next room?"

"I believe she is, but that is of no consequence to me. I am about to be separated from you, and I must tell you all I think and feel, whatever may result from the avowal. You do not,—you cannot know the anguish I suffer on your account, when I see you persisting in error on so momentous a subject. I assure you that thought is a dagger to my heart. Oh! do let me persuade you!" she exclaimed, with the most affectionate earnestness.

"And can you suppose, my dearest Rose, that I feel less anxiety on your account, than you do on mine? Believe me, your spiritual state is equally distressing to me."

"Oh! no, no! that cannot be; for, though you differ from us in so many material points, you have more than once acknowledged to me, that you believe it is possible to be saved in the Catholic communion. You cannot, therefore, feel for me as I do for you; for my religion teaches me that there is no salvation in any other, and," she added, with painful emotion, "that if you remain in your errors, you must inevitably perish."

"Well, my dear Rose, shall we examine the subject together and endeavor to ascertain, by the word of God, which of us is in the right way? Will you consent to become my instructress, if I am in error?"

"Oh! no, I dare not attempt it! I am not equal to such an undertaking: I am too young, too ignorant."

"Yet let me assure you, Rose, it is not learning that is requisite. Though I have no doubt on the subject, my mind is quite open to conviction. If you can but prove your sentiments from the Bible, I require no other test of truth. Only do that, and I shall embrace the Roman Catholic faith immediately."

"Would you indeed?" inquired Rose, with animation. "Oh! how easy it would be to satisfy you! But no.... I am not sufficiently acquainted with the subject. Yet I will propose another method, which, if you love me, and are really unprejudiced, you cannot refuse. Will you consent to converse with another person on the subject?—with a priest, for instance?"

Emily hesitated for a moment: there seemed something like

tendency, in the idea of her encountering the learning, the subtlety, and eloquence of a priest; and she felt tempted to decline the contest. But she remembered the apostolic injunction, "Be ready always to give an answer to every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." She recollected also, that God had not unfrequently "chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise," and resolved, for the sake of Rose, to trust in the promised assistance of God, and the truth and goodness of her cause. She therefore replied,

"I will, my dear Rose;—bring me your confessor, or any one else you please. With the help of God and my Bible, I neither dread the trial, nor have any doubt of the result."

"Thank you, thank you, dear Emily; I shall beg of Monsieur de Beauvais, our venerable confessor, to do me the favor of undertaking your instruction."

"But do not misunderstand me, Rose,—do not mistake my words. Let not Monsieur de Beauvais imagine that it is my own request, or that I have any doubt on the subject. I again repeat it, I am perfectly convinced of the superiority of Protestantism; I have no more doubt of it, than I have that the sun is now enlightening the sky. It is for *your* sake alone that I submit to the trial, and, therefore, the request to Monsieur de Beauvais must come entirely from yourself."

"I understand you, dear Emily, and shall take care to represent it in the proper light."

"But allow me, my friend, to make one observation on something you have said. I do indeed believe it possible for a Roman Catholic to be saved; for your church still retains some of the great truths essential to salvation, though she has fearfully disfigured and added to them; and I trust there are many sincere Christians in her communion, who, in the midst of much darkness and error, exercise a saving reliance on those blessed truths. But this does not alter my opinion of the system. I certainly believe you to be in error, and under great delusion, which renders your salvation much more difficult, and your situation often a dangerous one. I, therefore, only consent to the discussion you propose, on condition that you shall be present at it, unless forbidden by your friends."

"Well, I agree to that condition, and shall be but too happy if we succeed. Oh! what joy for me, if I could but see you a Catholic!"

"I do not think, dear Rose, you will ever have that pleasure. However, I am willing to abide the test of my principles. Let Monsieur de Beauvais come with temperate argument, and with the Bible in his hand; I shall hear him with candor; and I again repeat, I do not fear the result. But, remember, I will pay no deference to the authority of councils, or the traditions of men;

I acknowledge no other standard of religion than the Word of God, and that alone shall decide the contest."

It was now time for Rose to depart; but the separation of the friends was rendered much less painful, by the arrangement which had just been made. The eyes of Rose sparkled with delight at the thought of Emily's conversion; which, to her sanguine imagination, appeared little less than certain; and Emily, though she knew that conversion is the work of God alone, could not help indulging a hope, that the discussion in question might, through the blessing of Him "without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy," be the means of leading her friend to inquire into the truth of those dogmas, by which she had hitherto been kept in bondage.

A confirmation was soon to take place in the small Protestant chapel of S——, Bishop Luscombe having been appointed to visit, for that purpose, the different English communities scattered over the continent. Several of Madame d'Elfort's English pupils were desirous of attending the rite, and wrote to their parents for permission to do so. This was, in most cases, granted; but their governess positively refused her sanction. The young ladies, therefore, submitted, though not without murmuring;—all except one, whose spirit rose indignantly against this arbitrary exercise of power. She remonstrated loudly; and, as there was nothing to be hoped from Miss Bradford's apathy on religious subjects, she entreated Emily's good offices with Madame d'Elfort, as she was generally supposed to have considerable influence over that lady's mind. Emily promised to try what she could do; but she found her governess inflexible, and proof against every argument she could use.

"My dear child," she said, "I am truly grieved to be compelled to refuse you anything; but I cannot consent to your request. I allow my Protestant pupils the free exercise of their religion; I never interfere with their principles; but I will not promote them. My religion teaches me that your system is one of fearful and most dangerous error; and my conscience will not allow me to sanction or countenance any of its ordinances."

"But, Madame," remonstrated Emily, "would you not think it very unjust and arbitrary, if a Protestant governess were to prevent a Roman Catholic child from partaking in the ordinances of her church?"

"That is a case, my young friend, which I can scarcely think possible," replied Madame d'Elfort, with a slight curl of her lip. "No true Catholic would ever entrust his child to those whom he considers to be in error, especially at that age, when she ought to be admitted to the most sacred rites of the church. Besides, I have conversed with some members of your communion on the subject, and they spoke of confirmation as of a form, which might

be postponed, or even omitted altogether, without any serious dereliction of their principles."

Emily could only blush for these professed members of the church of England, and reply, that confirmation was strongly insisted upon by that church, not only as a duty, but a privilege, and a most important means of grace.

Madame d'Elfort looked perplexed. "I know not," said she, "how to understand all these diversities of opinion in your church. There ought to be no such latitude of interpretation. Our duties are clearly and explicitly stated to us; and we can neither slight nor neglect any of the appointed ordinances of our church, without incurring the fearful peril of mortal sin. Every duty, with us, is imperative; every religious observance indispensable. But, with you, it seems to me as if every one had a rule of his own."

"My dear Madame," inquired Emily, "are there no persons in your church, as well as in ours, who neglect the means of grace, and whose works deny their Christian profession?"

"I acknowledge there are, indeed, but too many; but they are persons devoid of all religion; whereas, those I speak of, in your communion, are professedly pious and devout, and are considered so by others. Excuse me, my young friend, but these inconsistencies have often struck me, as being strong arguments against the Protestant system."

Emily only answered by a deep sigh, and then, after a pause, inquired if this was Madame d'Elfort's final answer to Miss Ashton's petition?

"It is, my love; and I have another reason for it, besides those I have told you already. Miss Bradford does not think the confirmation of any importance to the young ladies at present; I cannot, therefore, require her to begin a course of instruction for that object; and, without a great deal of private, as well as public, preparation, I should not feel justified in allowing any pupils of mine to attend an ordinance of so much religious importance. Tell them, therefore, that they must wait till their return to England, before they ratify their baptismal vows, by the office of confirmation."

Madame d'Elfort now kissed Emily, and they separated. Isabella Ashton was indignant at her refusal, and so was Mr. Berrington, the English minister at S—. He even resolved to inform the Bishop of it, and it is probable that he executed his intention. But he mistook the character of Madame d'Elfort, when he attributed her conduct solely to bigotry. There was far more true conscientiousness in it, than was displayed by those, whose inconsistency thus brought a scandal on the truth of the Protestant faith.

Emily was delighted, a few days after this, to see her friend Rose return to the school, and still more so, when she perceived that

her countenance was more cheerful than formerly, and that her reserve seemed, at last, to have entirely disappeared. She immediately sought an opportunity of being alone with Emily, and entered into conversation with her on the subject of her own situation and feelings.

"You can scarcely imagine, my beloved Emily," said she, "how happy I am at this moment. Joy has so long been a stranger to this poor heart, that I feel as if I were in a delightful dream, and sometimes fear I shall lose all my happiness on awaking. You will, I am sure, sympathize with me, when I tell you that my dear father seems at last to have 'come to himself,' and to a sense of his duty. He has discovered the true character of the wicked woman who has so long governed and held him in thrall. He has solemnly sworn to dismiss her, and she is to leave the house as soon as he has made arrangements for her future provision in a distant province. It was my earnest wish to remain at home during the intervening time, as the influence which it has pleased Heaven to give me over my father's mind might have contributed to confirm his good resolutions; and, besides, I feared that Madame Gerand's malice might be wreaked on my dear, helpless, unoffending mother. My uncle, however, would not hear of my remaining under the same roof with her; and, as my confessor also thought it more consistent with propriety that I should return to school, I have reluctantly yielded, on their promising to keep a watchful eye over my poor mamma's comfort."

Emily expressed her sincere pleasure at this intelligence, and Rose resumed,

"I scarcely need tell you, my dear friend, that I have been very miserable,—so much so, indeed, that I had, at one time, almost resolved to take the veil in a convent, that I might be enabled to devote myself entirely to a life of prayer for my unhappy family. The only consideration that withheld me, was the helpless situation of my beloved mother and sister. But now, I look forward to the sweet hope of devoting myself to the comfort of the dear invalid, and the education of my darling Claire. And, my kind friend, I have preferred my request about you to good Monsieur de Beauvais, and he has consented to converse with you the first day he is at leisure. Oh! what happiness, my beloved Emily! it is almost too much for your poor Rose!"

Emily smiled at the fallacy of her expectations on the latter subject, but did not wish to damp the ardor of her joy. The bell now summoned them back to the house, but as they were entering, they met Madame d'Elfort, who, passing her arm round Emily's waist, drew her again into the garden.

"*Ma petite fille*," said she affectionately, "I have long observed with pleasure the intimacy between you and Rose de Liancourt, and cannot refrain from congratulating you on having secured

such a friend. Rose is, indeed, a most superior girl,—one among a thousand. I have found it quite a privilege to be entrusted with the education of so pious, so single-hearted, and heavenly-minded a being. Her sister, who was also my pupil, was a saint,—almost an angel upon earth; and Rose is little less. Marie was early transplanted to the garden of paradise, and I cannot but fear that our sweet Rose will not be long an earthly flower. She lives but for her family, and would have devoted herself to a cloister, that she might pray for them continually, had not her confessor persuaded her that her mother's and sister's happiness, and perhaps her father's conversion, would be better secured by her remaining with them. Monsieur de Beauvais has frequently told me, that he never had under his charge a young person so eminently conscientious, so pure in heart and soul, and, at the same time, so thoroughly humble, so fervently devoted to God. Indeed, so uncommon and intense is her piety, that he does not hesitate in avowing his firm belief, that she is intended by God for some great and meritorious work,—some singular and exalted destiny."

Emily's tears silently bore witness to the interest and emotion with which she heard these praises of her friend. Madame d'Elfort's being summoned away prevented the necessity of a reply; but she mentally exclaimed, as she retraced her steps to the house, "Dear, dear Rose! may the 'Sun of Righteousness' arise on your soul, and the Holy Spirit 'guide you into all truth,' and that, indeed, will be a glorious and a blessed destiny!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

A CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.—Prov. iii. 6.

THE next fortnight was a time of separation and mourning, in Madame d'Elfort's establishment. Miss Maxwell and one of her sisters, Anna Lushington, and two of the Misses Danvers, left the school not to return, and Emma and Louisa Selwyn were also unexpectedly summoned home, in consequence of their mother's illness. Rose de Liancourt was on the eve of her departure; and the arrival of Mr. Howard, with his two younger daughters, at B—, was the signal for Emily, Caroline, and Lydia's also bid-

ding farewell to the circle of which they had so long formed a part. Caroline wept with overpowering emotion, on embracing her father and sisters, and Lydia was almost wild with joy, though her transports were mixed with many tears, at the recollection of her departed mother. But the greatest anxiety was excited, in the minds of both his daughters and niece, by the evident alteration which had taken place in the appearance of Mr. Howard. He was pale, thin, and weak, and seemed not to have recovered his spirits. They trusted, however, that, when he had rested from the fatigue of travelling, he would look more like himself. They had a long conversation with him, in which he informed them that his wife had, during her short illness, requested to see their friend Mr. Morton, and that his visits and ministrations had been a source of great comfort to her, in her dying moments.

Lydia clasped her hands, and raised her eyes to heaven, with unutterable thankfulness, and Emily's heart swelled with grateful joy, while Caroline hung down her head, and continued to weep in silence.

Mr. Howard resolved to remain a few days at S—, and then to take his daughters and niece to Paris, where he would place Henrietta and Julia at school, and afterwards make a small tour with Emily, Caroline, and Lydia. It was but too evident that his health was declining; but much benefit was anticipated from this proposed excursion.

The day was now fast approaching, when the young people were to separate from the little society in which they had moved for upwards of a year. There is something very sad in the breaking up of even school-associations. A number of young persons are brought together under the same roof; they engage in the same occupations, participate in the same joys and sorrows, enjoy the same privileges, live in the most familiar sisterly intercourse, and sometimes contract the closest and most endearing friendships. A few years roll on, and they are separated; one beloved face disappears after another; and their places are supplied by others, till the whole society assumes a new aspect. The persons who once composed it are scattered on the face of the earth; the links of familiar intercourse are broken asunder; and oh! how seldom do those of friendship endure! It may be said with truth, that many school-intimacies are but the effects of inexperience and misplaced affection, and, therefore, being inexpedient, are better dissolved. Yet it is melancholy to witness the utter indifference, the cold salutation, if not the averted eye, and contemptuous look, between those who once shared the same chamber, perhaps the same bed, and seemed almost to have but one heart.

Emily felt all this, as she looked round on her young companions; but her heart melted in peculiar sympathy for Helen, who seemed almost overwhelmed by the thought of the heart-sol-

tude in which she was soon to be left. She expressed an earnest desire to accompany Emily and Caroline to the Lord's table, the following Sabbath,—the last they were to spend at Madame d'Elfort's. She had never yet partaken of that solemn ordinance; and Emily felt it her duty to impress on her mind the necessity of coming to it in humble faith, and with a sincere resolution of devoting herself to God. She found her timid, fearful, and self-abased, but anxiously desirous of coming to Christ alone for salvation, and of living to his glory, by walking in "the narrow way that leadeth unto life." She lent her an excellent little work on the subject, entitled "The Christian Guest," and encouraged her to come to him who has graciously invited the "weary and heavy-laden."

Miss Bradford was to spend that afternoon with some friends, and several of the young ladies expressed the greatest pleasure at this circumstance, as they hoped to enjoy a comfortable hour of serious devotion, with Emily once more as their leader and instructress. Before she began to read prayers, however, Emily spoke a few words of mild reproof to several of the young ladies, whom she knew to have behaved irreverently during the service, since it had been conducted by Miss Bradford, and expressed a hope that they would not again be guilty of so great a sin. Some of them hung down their heads, ashamed of their conduct; Fanny Gordon, and one or two more, exchanged looks of scornful resentment; but the others endeavored to extenuate their fault, by saying that Miss Bradford herself had no religion, and did not set them a good example. Emily, however, entreated them to remember that, even if it were so, her sin would not lessen or excuse theirs, and that "every one must give an account of himself to God." They promised to be more attentive in future, and their behavior on the present occasion was certainly most decorous. The greatest seriousness prevailed during the prayers, and when they read a chapter in the manner to which they had before been accustomed, conversing on it as they proceeded, the greater number seemed to enter into the subject with deep and lively interest.

Emily then read the Missionary Prayer, for the last time; for, as Miss Bradford had refused to enter into their missionary plan, it was necessary that their little association should be dissolved. A last collection was made, and the whole amount of their fund, which was indeed but a trifle, comparatively considered, was entrusted to Emily, who the next day transmitted it to Mrs. Somerville, for the benefit of the Church Missionary Society.

It was then agreed that this, their last solemn meeting, should be concluded, as formerly, by singing a hymn, which was chosen by mutual consent. It was one from an old collection, but was considered peculiarly appropriate to their present circumstances. It began with these words,

Our hearts by love together knit,
Cemented, joined in one,
One hope, one heart, one mind, one voice,
'Tis heaven on earth begun.

And ended with the following lines,

And when Thou mak'st Thy jewels up,
And sett'st Thy starry crown;
When all thy glittering gems shall shine,
Proclaimed by Thee Thine own;
May we,—we little band of love,—
We sinners, saved by grace,—
From glory into glory changed,
Behold Thee face to face!

'Tis almost done,—'tis almost o'er,—
We're joining those who've gone before:
We soon shall meet on that blest shore,
We soon shall meet to part no more.

Whatever might be the merits of this hymn, considered merely as a poetical composition, its effect on those who now sang it was powerful and striking. At the expression, "we little band of love," they all rose simultaneously from their seats, and joining their hands, as by one common impulse, remained thus linked together, till the hymn was finished. Tears of emotion, of affection, and regret, were glittering in almost every eye; and, at the conclusion, they rushed into each other's arms, and wept and sobbed, as they embraced their departing friends.

This burst of feeling was rather disagreeably interrupted, by the sarcastic laugh and insulting mockery of a French girl, Clémentine Vermont, who had been listening to them in the adjoining room, with the intention of turning the Protestant service into ridicule. The little party, therefore, broke up, and retired to the garden. But Mademoiselle Vermont did not long remain unpunished. Rose de Liancourt had heard her, and soon accosted her with an indignant rebuke. Clémentine replied with scornful defiance; Rose warmly remonstrated on the shameful impropriety of her conduct, and was answered with violent invectives; till the loudness of the dispute attracted the notice of Madame d'Elfort, who insisted on being made acquainted with its cause. But it would be difficult to describe the indignation and contempt with which she regarded the discomfited Clémentine. After giving her one of those tremendous reprimands which were never forgotten, she sent for Emily, and commanded her to make an humble apology for her conduct; then, with a look and tone that admitted of no reply, she said,

"Go to your room, Mademoiselle, and remain there two days in solitude. I hope your own reflections there will convince you of the truth of what I now tell you,—that the person who can, under any pretence whatever, disturb the devotions of others,

proves that she has no religion at all, and deserves the utmost contempt of every well-thinking being."

The next day was the anniversary of the formation of the school; and it was distinguished by a yearly mass, instituted by Madame d'Elfort for the success of her establishment. This was certainly a mark of sincere, though mistaken, piety; yet, considering the doctrine inculcated by the Romish church on the subject of the mass, and its being declared to be a propitiatory sacrifice, Emily felt that there was something profane and shocking, in thus appropriating its supposed benefits to a matter so purely worldly. Madame d'Elfort, however, was accustomed to take all her pupils, Protestants as well as Papists, to the cathedral, on that important occasion, and it would have been thought a very bad compliment, if not an insult, to her, to have refused to attend. Emily, therefore, went with the others, and once more witnessed the gorgeous pomp, and undisguised idolatry, of the mass. She was much gratified, however, to observe that none of the English pupils knelt, though some of those who were near the governors and teachers assumed an attitude, which might almost have been mistaken for kneeling.

The Tuesday was fixed for the departure of Mr. Howard and his family; and the same day Rose de Liancourt also bade farewell to Madame d'Elfort's establishment. She had not again mentioned the subject of Emily's conversation with the priest, and it was, therefore, probable, that Monsieur de Beauvais had declined the controversy. Emily felt glad that it was so, on her own account, though she could scarce help regretting it for the sake of Rose.

Many tears were shed on both sides, as the young friends separated; but a frequent correspondence was agreed upon, and, as Mr. Howard would probably return that way, hopes were mutually indulged that they might meet again. Madame d'Elfort also made Emily promise to pay her a visit on their return, and they parted in the most affectionate manner. There was a noble sincerity, a lofty uprightness, a genuine sensibility, in that lady's character, which not only commanded respect, but were eminently calculated to insure the affection of every heart capable of appreciating those qualities of a high and generous mind. Yet it is certain that she was generally much more feared and respected, than loved by her pupils; and perhaps it was in consequence of this well-known circumstance, that she became so much attached to those few young persons, who, like Rose and Emily, had repaid her kindness with affectionate confidence. She was not a character to be regarded with indifference; and where she was loved at all, it was with a feeling almost amounting to enthusiasm.

It would be impossible to describe the sorrow and distress of

poor Helen, at the departure of her friends, and the prospect of being left without one serious companion of her own age. They, too, felt deeply for her; but Emily endeavored to make her "look unto Jesus, as the Author and Finisher of her faith," and entreated her to exercise more dependence upon Him, assuring her that "He would not suffer her to be tempted above that she was able;" but would make "His strength perfect" in her weakness, and "His grace sufficient for her," though she was deprived of earthly support.

"My dearest Helen," said she, "be faithful to your Saviour, and He will never leave you, nor forsake you." Remember the promise, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths." Your example may do much among your companions, and it is your duty to promote their spiritual improvement, whenever you have an opportunity. There are still some of them well-disposed towards religion, and among them I should wish you to pay particular attention to Eliza Kaimes. She is a dear, interesting little girl, and she, as well as the others, will often look up to you for example and direction. Do not disappoint them, my dear Helen, but endeavor to be instrumental in bringing them to the fold of the Good Shepherd."

Poor Helen only wept, and reminded Emily that she had promised to write a few lines for her, which were to serve as a memento of their endearing intercourse, and a record of Christian friendship, containing her parting advice. Emily had not forgotten it, and when she bade the gentle girl farewell, she put into her hand the following lines.

FAREWELL TO HELEN.

'Twas but lately I welcomed thy steps to the altar,
Where the "cup of salvation" is freely bestowed;
Saw the tear dim thine eye,—heard thy soft accents falter,
While approaching the table,—the feast of thy God.

Oh! then, while thy cheek wore the tinge of emotion,
With what feelings of grateful, of rapturous joy
Did I view the meek fervor,—the heart-felt devotion,
That glowed in thy bosom, and beamed from thine eye!

With what anxious delight have I watched the first breaking
Of the pure light of truth, as it dawned on thy mind;
Have I seen thy young spirit with earnestness seeking
That Saviour,—that God, whom to seek is to find.

Oh! 'twas sweet to my soul, as the first blush of morning,
Or the rose with its fragrance embalming the gale;
Or the dew-drops, like crystal, the hawthorn adorning,
Ere the rays of the sun all their freshness exhale.

Fairest bud of fair promise, in loneliness growing,
On thy leaf may the sweet dews of heaven distil!
May the rich stream of grace, through the wilderness flowing,
Adorn thee with beauty, and nourish thee still!

May the bright "Sun of Righteousness" shine on thy bosom,
 With benignant effulgence arraying thy morn,
 In the beauties of holiness cause thee to blossom,
 And thy soul with the Spirit's mild graces adorn.

From the storm of distress, from the moon of temptation,
 From the night-dews so deadly, that wither and fade,
 Be the Saviour thy shield; be the "Rock of salvation"
 Thy shelter,—thy refuge, almighty to aid.

Dearest girl! I must leave thee,—exposed to the dangers
 Of a spot where religion must arm for the strife;
 Where the snares of the world, and the gay voice of strangers
 Will oft tempt thee to turn from the pathway of life.

Oh! beware of the perils,—the snares that surround thee!
 Be humble, be watchful, and fervently pray,
 That the wings of the Highest may hover around thee,
 Thy protection, thy safety, by night and by day.

Remember the vows of devoted surrender,
 Thou didst make, at the feast of a crucified Lord;
 Remember his love, so unbounded, so tender,
 To the soul by His covenant mercy restored.

Oh! grieve not His Spirit!—the bond of that union
 Which believers enjoy with the Fountain of love;
 But live under His smile,—in endearing communion
 With the "Father of lights," and the spirits above.

Dearest Helen, farewell!—while in sorrow I press thee
 To a bosom that throbs with affection sincere,
 My full heart melts in prayer to the God who can bless thee,
 And preserve thee from evil, while sojourning here.

Farewell!—sometimes think on thy friend with affection;
 Oh! be faithful to Jesus! be still on thy guard;
 May his love be thy sure,—thy unfailing protection,—
 Thy portion in life,—thine eternal reward!

CHAPTER XXViii.

THE FRENCH PROTESTANT SCHOOL.

I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead—
 Rev. iii. 1.

THE cousins had not parted without tears, from a society in which they had lived for more than a twelvemonth; and with the exception of Miss Bradford, Miss Gordon, and one or two others,

They had received from all the English inmates of the establishment, the most unequivocal marks of affection, and sorrow at their departure. The French girls had also expressed their regret, except Clémentine Vermont; and if Mademoiselle St. André had seen them depart with ill-disguised pleasure, Mademoiselle Morhay had loudly declared her esteem for their characters. Caroline was almost inconsolable, at leaving her friend Sophie Dorville; Madame d'Elfort's last affectionate embrace, and the tears that stood in her eyes, had completely overcome Emily's assumed firmness, and the floods of tears with which Lydia had torn herself from the arms of the sobbing Helen, continued to flow long after they had lost sight of the town and its inhabitants.

This depression of spirits was not lessened, on observing that Mr. Howard, instead of seeming better in health than when he arrived at S—, was evidently worse, and much weaker than the last time they had seen him. They, therefore, exerted themselves to amuse him; and, as they travelled on, the scenery through which they passed, and the different incidents connected with their journey, insensibly contributed to restore some degree of cheerfulness to the whole party.

On their arrival at Paris, Mr. Howard took his daughters and niece to see whatever was worth seeing in that gay capital; but his own health continued so alarmingly to decline, that the physicians he consulted recommended his hastening to Italy, and spending the ensuing winter in that genial climate. After a month's residence at Paris, therefore, he communicated to the young people the necessity for his departure, and his intention of either taking them back to Madame d'Elfort's, or placing them at any other school they might choose, till his return, when he would conduct Emily, Caroline and Lydia, back to England. This, he hoped, he would be sufficiently recovered to do the ensuing spring; but, as Emily looked at his pale countenance and wasted form, she could not suppress a sigh of painful foreboding. Caroline, too, seemed struck with apprehension, and earnestly begged that her father would allow her to accompany him. To this, however, he would not consent, observing, that, should sickness or death deprive her of his guidance and protection, it would be a source of misery to him, to think of her being left helpless and friendless in a distant land.

All the girls wept at this suggestion, but Mr. Howard requested them to lose no time in choosing the school where they might wish to be left. At this proposal, they all hesitated, though from various motives; but, when Caroline at length named Madame d'Elfort's, Emily and Lydia felt that it was time to speak candidly.

"My dear uncle," said the former, "I have the most sincere esteem and affection for Madame d'Elfort, nor do I think we could

possibly be placed at a better school. But pardon me if I say, that, as a Protestant, I cannot wish to be again a resident in a Roman Catholic seminary, and that I am convinced it is highly dangerous to entrust young people to such tuition."

"Oh! yes, dear papa," added Lydia, "it is indeed very, very dangerous! I can speak from my own experience of the fascinating influence of popery; and I am not the only one who has felt its ensnaring power."

"But you must acknowledge," observed Caroline, rather indignantly, "that our principles were never interfered with; and I certainly think, Emily and Lydia, that your arguments imply a want of confidence in the Protestant cause, for, if it cannot bear a comparison with its rival, it must be weak indeed."

"We do not doubt the power of truth, Caroline," replied Emily, "but we distrust our own hearts. The scripture says, 'Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall;' and, if we are directed to pray every day, 'Lead us not into temptation,' we have no right to rush into it of our own accord."

"Dear papa!" exclaimed Lydia, clasping her father's hand with energy, "do, pray, place us wherever you please, but let it be at a Protestant school."

"Well, my dear children," said the indulgent father, "I will place you at whatever school you may choose; only endeavour to agree among yourselves, and let me know your decision to-morrow."

That very evening, Lydia sought and obtained a private interview with her father, before he retired to rest. In this conversation, she openly declared to him her fears on her sister's account, and the reasons which made her dread Caroline's further association with Roman Catholics. Mr. Howard heard her with attention, and not without surprise, but expressed his incredulity of there being any sufficient ground for her apprehensions.

"Nonsense, my love," exclaimed he, "your sisterly anxiety must have greatly magnified the danger. You cannot persuade me that Caroline can be so devoid of common sense, as to credit the absurdities of the Popish religion. She is attached to Mademoiselle Dorville, and that accounts for all that has caused your alarm. You are an enthusiast, my Lydia, and therefore a little visionary."

Lydia felt vexed and mortified at the indifference with which her father treated the subject; but she renewed her entreaties with persevering ardor, and at length, by her tears and importunities, succeeded in obtaining a promise that they should not be placed at a Roman Catholic school.

Mr. Howard fulfilled this promise, though against the wishes of Caroline; and she submitted to his decision, though evidently not without reluctance. Inquiries were made for a Protestant

sion, and Mr. Howard at length fixed upon one, conducted by, Mademoiselle Duvallon, very beautifully situated in the environs, of Paris. This school was recommended by many advantages and the governess, teachers, and pupils, being all Protestants and constantly attending a French Protestant place of worship, no possible objection could be made to so eligible an establishment. Emily, indeed, could have wished to inquire as to the *piety* of the governess, and Lydia also was anxious on that subject; but they had no means of acquiring the information they so much desired; and it was finally settled, that they should enter Mademoiselle Duvallon's seminary in three days. This interval was one of much painful interest to the cousins; for they could not banish from their minds a fearful presentiment of evil; and they felt as if the conversations they now had with Mr. Howard were the last they should ever be favored with. This impression, for which, indeed, there seemed but too much cause, threw a cloud of indescribable sadness over these last hours of affectionate intercourse, and invested their parting with the bitter anguish of a final separation. Mr. Howard tore himself with difficulty from his weeping daughters and niece; and they found themselves once more among strangers, while he pursued his journey towards the south, in search of that restoration to health which he was never to experience.

The society among which they now found themselves consisted of about forty young ladies, and three teachers. There were but few English girls among them, and those of the most uninteresting description. They soon found that, if there was no superstition in their religion, there was also very little heart or sincerity. Their religious observances were few, and distinguished by the most chilling indifference. The pulpit in their church was occupied by a minister of eminent talents, and great reputation for eloquence; but, alas! how cold, how lifeless were those discourses, in which a baseless system of morality was substituted for vital religion,—the praises of human virtue and merit for the glorious work of salvation,—and the graces of oratory for the “joyful sound” of the “truth as it is in Jesus!”

They felt that they had indeed escaped from the precincts of a corrupted church; but they were now in the midst of a congregation which was but as a dry and withered branch of the beautiful Protestant vine. It was a shadow without a substance,—a body without a soul.

They had hoped to find, at least, more decorum in the observance of the Sabbath, among these professed Protestants, than among the poor blinded Roman Catholics. But here, again, they were disappointed. There was much less devotion in their religious services, and quite as much dissipation afterwards. The profane song, the giddy dance, the thoughtless amusement, were

as prevalent as they had been at S——; and it was but too evident their religion was but a mere lifeless form, without any vital power, or influence on their hearts and conduct.

Emily's soul sickened within her, as she looked round on this scene of spiritual desolation; and Lydia and Caroline seemed still less able to conquer their disgust.

"I would much rather be among the Roman Catholics," exclaimed the former, with her usual vehemence of feeling. "They, at least, are sincere, if they are mistaken in their views; and there is an earnestness in their attention to their ceaseless round of unmeaning forms, a conscientiousness in their strict and punctual discharge of every duty enjoined by their church, which seem, in a great measure, to atone for their ignorance and bigotry. But here everything is hollow, heartless, and unreal; it is an atmosphere which withers up the soul, blights every religious feeling, and eats, like a canker, into the very core of our spiritual affections. I could love Madame d'Elfort, with all her strictness, and her hatred of Protestantism, because I know her to be sincerely devoted to what she believes to be truth; but I cannot look with patience at Mademoiselle Duvallon, when I reflect that, while professing a purer faith, she is in reality devoid of everything like religion."

"You are too warm, my dear Lydia," replied Emily with a smile; but there was more of sadness than pleasure in that smile. "We have, indeed, few privileges here, for we do not even hear the gospel preached in the church, as we had the happiness of doing at S——; and I acknowledge that nominal Protestantism is not much more like true religion than Popery itself. But let us not repine, or be discontented; if we are cut off from the streams of spiritual enjoyment, let us draw nearer to the Fountain; and, after all, I trust the time of our sojourn here will not be very long."

It was *not*, indeed, to be long, although neither Emily nor Lydia anticipated its being so speedily terminated. Caroline had evinced much dissatisfaction with her present situation; but they were not aware that she had long been importuning her father to remove them at the end of the first quarter. Mr. Howard had hitherto held out against her entreaties; but at length he yielded, on condition that Lydia and Emily accompanied her. Great, therefore, was their astonishment, when she informed them that she had obtained her father's sanction to their becoming boarders at the convent of St. Anne,—that same convent near S—— which they had once visited with Mr. Fortescue, and which Sophia Dorville had now entered as a novice! The reasons assigned by Caroline for this extraordinary step were her anxiety to enjoy as much of her friend's society as possible, while she remained in France; her wish to acquire the knowledge of several beautiful kinds of needle-work, for which the nuns were particularly famed;

and the dislike they all entertained towards the heartless system of merely nominal Protestantism that prevailed in their present abode.

Emily and Lydia looked at each other, and could not help apprehending that there were other and weightier reasons for so singular a resolution. They hesitated what to answer, but Caroline, construing their silence into an unwillingness to accede to her proposal, exclaimed, with an energy that startled them both,

"I may as well tell you at once, that I am *determined* to remove to St. Anne's. You are at liberty to remain here, if you prefer it; but my decision is made; and, as I am sure my father will not place any obstacle in the way of his daughter's happiness, I shall depart alone, under the protection of Major and Mrs. Fortescue, who are now in Paris, and will not refuse to take me with them."

As Caroline uttered these words, she rose, and, as if to prevent the possibility of a reply, instantly left the room.

"I feared it would be so!" exclaimed Lydia, bursting into tears; "my poor sister has been so fascinated by Sophia Dorville, and the arts of the papists, that she will finish by becoming one herself! Oh! how I wish papa were here, that I might implore him, even on my knees, to prevent her rushing into further danger! but, alas! he is now so far away, that, before we could write to him, and have an answer, she will be settled at the convent, and the snares of popery drawn more closely than ever around her. What shall we do, dearest Emily? Do advise me, for I am quite bewildered."

"Let us seek Divine direction, my Lydia; let us seek it by earnest prayer. I feel at present quite as incapable of deciding as yourself; but we will talk over the subject to-morrow."

They retired to bed, but not to sleep. Lydia spent the night in tears and broken petitions; Emily in self-examination, self-accusation, and earnest prayer. She felt that she had been blameably negligent, or rather timid, in not having long since inquired into her cousin's sentiments, and used every endeavor to prevent the errors that surrounded her from acquiring an ascendancy over her too susceptible mind. She had allowed an overstrained delicacy, and the pride of wounded affection, to silence her tongue; she had suffered herself to be too easily repulsed, and had thus yielded to another that influence over her cousin's mind and affections, which might have been exerted to save her from delusion. And even since her fears had been frequently excited, she had been but too willing to persuade herself that no danger existed; she had shrunk from investigating the very circumstances which she felt to be alarming, and had suffered herself to be deterred, by false and visionary hopes, from speaking explicitly to her uncle. All these causes of self-reproach she now acknowledged and bitterly lamented. She earnestly implored forgiveness, through the blood

of atonement, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to direct her future proceedings.

After much reflection, deliberation, and prayer, she came to the resolution of sacrificing her own wishes and feelings, rather than lose the opportunity of repairing the evil she had thus suffered to increase. Again she prayed for grace and strength to fulfil her intention, and arose in the morning, with a mind somewhat more composed.

Lydia also rose early, and sought an interview with her cousin. The traces of tears and anxiety were visible on both their countenances.

"What have you decided upon, dear Emily? What do you think we ought to do?"

"Were your father near us, my love, I think we ought to exert ourselves to the utmost, in order to persuade him to prevent Caroline from taking this dangerous step; but under existing circumstances, I feel it to be our duty not to forsake her. She seems immovable in her resolution, and I think therefore, we had better accompany her, as we may, by the blessing of God, become the means of opening her eyes to the errors of Popery, and preventing her from being still further entangled in its snares. I have cause for humiliation, when I reflect on the supineness and neglect of which I have been guilty towards her; and it is my earnest desire and prayer that I may be instrumental in repairing the mischief."

"If you feel self-condemned, Emily, I have great reason to repent of the same sin. We have both been too willing to believe that all was right, and too unwilling to intrude into Caroline's confidence. But we must now dismiss that false delicacy, and endeavor to snatch her from the delusions of Popery. I tremble for the result of her further associating with Sophia Dorville; I dread her influence, and that of the nuns. But let us, as you say, go with her, and use our utmost efforts to counteract the evil. There is one danger, however, which we have not yet contemplated. Shall we be justified in exposing Henrietta and Julia to the same perils that we dread for Caroline?"

"That is a subject which I had not considered! It certainly makes our responsibility greater; but I am sure Caroline would not consent to their being left behind; we must, therefore, trust to the blessing of God on our endeavors to preserve them from the fascinations of Popery.

"Oh! that my father were here!" exclaimed Lydia, clasping her hands with passionate earnestness, "or that he were only where a letter could reach him! But as it is, we have no choice, and must submit to circumstances. Heaven grant in mercy that the worst may now be over."

When they met Caroline in the morning, she looked pale, but

resolved, and inquired, with a strong effort to be calm, "whether they had decided on accompanying her, or preferred remaining at Mademoiselle Duvallon's?"

"We shall go with you, dear Caroline," replied Lydia, "we shall not desert you; and though we cannot help feeling deeply grieved, at the preference you thus evince for a religion which is so decidedly unscriptural, we still indulge the hope that your eyes may ere long be opened to its errors."

Caroline was startled by this straightforward observation of Lydia, and replied, with considerable embarrassment,

"What can possibly make you talk in this way, Lydia? What preference have I shown to the Roman Catholic religion? Surely I may love a Roman Catholic friend, without embracing her religion."

"Yes, dear Caroline," rejoined Emily, "but you cannot deny that you are at present but too favorably disposed towards the Romish church. It is time that all reserve and dissimulation should cease between us; and we must insist on your granting us one favor;—let us examine the subject together, by the pure and unerring light of scripture. If it cannot bear that test, remember it is not of God. 'If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.'"

"Be it so," said Caroline, hastily, and as if anxious to change the subject, "and now I will go and show papa's letter to Mademoiselle Duvallon, and make preparations for our departure. I have written to Mrs. Fortescue, and I dare say she will call for us in a day or two."

Emily and Lydia could not help wondering at the rapidity and decision of Caroline's proceedings. They had, however, no time to lose, and immediately set about the preparations necessary for their departure.

Major and Mrs. Fortescue called to see them the next day, and expressed no little surprise at their intended removal to the convent. Caroline alleged the reasons she had already given to her family; but these kind and discriminating friends were not thus deceived. They remonstrated on the imprudence of such a proceeding, were it only with reference to the two younger girls; but Caroline was immovable, and they had no authority to interfere. Emily, however, confided to them without reserve, her fears, her intention, and her hopes, and received from them the assurance of their continued sympathy, assistance, and support.

Their departure was fixed for the third day, and the cousins bade farewell to Madame Duvallon and her establishment, without one sigh of regret. They had met with nothing there to interest their feelings, and they left behind them no sacred recollections, or endearing associations, to sadden their adieu.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE CONVENT.

Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.—TIM. IV. 9.

Once more the dark walls and frowning towers of S— rose to their view in the distance, and they could not altogether repress the feelings of sweet, yet painful, emotion they excited. These feelings were of various kinds, according to the different minds in which they arose. Lydia thought of the joy of Helen, and their mutual delight on meeting again; but her heart sunk in despondency, as she cast a glance on the future, and pictured a thousand evils, as resulting from their residence at the convent. The gentle form of Rose, also, rose before the eyes of Emily; but it was a mournful vision, and she turned from it to the contemplation of the difficult duties which now devolved upon her. She fearfully asked herself the question, "Who is sufficient for these things?" but she felt, at the same time, some encouragement from the promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

They were to remain at the Major's till the second day, when Mr. Fortescue had kindly promised to accompany them to the convent. Lydia immediately despatched a note to her friend Helen, to inform her of their arrival, promising, at the same time, to see her on the following morning. But what was her surprise, when the messenger returned, with the information that Miss Douglas had been gone about a week from Madame d'Elfort's, her parents having sent for her, in consequence of the delicate state of her health, which had been declining for the last three months! This was a severe disappointment to Lydia; but she comforted herself with the reflection, that her beloved Helen was now happy in the enjoyment of home-comforts, and that she should no doubt soon hear from her.

Emily thought it a duty she owed to Madame d'Elfort, to wait on that lady, and explain the cause of their entering the convent. This she did without reserve, and without concealing her repugnance to the arrangement. Madame d'Elfort received her with the utmost kindness, and expressed a hope that she would come very often to see her; but Emily could not determine, either from her countenance or her manner, whether she was pleased or otherwise with the intelligence she had communicated.

They now proceeded to the convent, and saw the same religious they had before conversed with. She expressed the greatest pleasure at their intention of becoming inmates of the house, and

after some conversation, called the lady who presided over the school department, a dignified *religieuse*, with whom all the necessary preliminaries were soon arranged. Caroline had inquired for her friend Sophie, but had been told she was engaged in the chapel. Thither they now repaired, though without the least expectation of seeing her. As they approached it, their ears were agreeably saluted by the full rich tones of the organ, blended with the soft melody of a female voice, which they instantly recognized as that of Sophie. She was practising an anthem for the next saint's day; the small gallery in which she sat was screened from the prying eye of curiosity, by a high curtain of crimson cloth: but the visitors stood beneath it, and listened in rapt admiration to the soul-subduing strains of the music. It was one of those spells which no heart, endowed with sensibility, could resist; and they remained as if chained to the spot, till the swelling notes of the organ gradually sunk into silence, and the sweet voice died away in one long, thrilling cadence. Soon after, the shutting of a door announced the departure of the musician, and left them at leisure to examine the small chapel in which they now were. It was not splendid, but was decorated with exquisite taste; the altar-piece was a magnificent painting of the resurrection, and on each side of it were two others, the one representing St. Anne, as engaged in the instruction of children, and the other a nun in the dress of the Ursuline order. Around a figure of the Virgin were suspended innumerable relics of various kinds, and some of which it was not easy to guess the nature, intermixed with offerings of different value, but generally handsome and costly. Several other pictures were hung about the chapel, and the altar-cloth, being the work of the nuns, was elegantly embroidered. A few old men and poor women were kneeling in different parts of the chapel, very busily counting their beads, yet not so deeply engaged as to prevent their looking at the strangers, with a curiosity which soon changed into displeasure, when they perceived that they neither knelt nor crossed themselves.

Caroline then expressed a wish to return to the parlor, as she thought they could now see Sophie; and the rest of the party did not oppose her desire. Sister Sophie immediately obeyed the summons, and it was curious to observe the meeting of the two friends. They could not embrace, for a double grating interposed between them, through which they could but just touch each other's fingers; and Caroline though fully prepared for the change, could scarcely repress a start, at the sight of Sophie in a novice's dress. The latter expressed the greatest delight at the prospect of their spending some time together, and, after a short conversation, the party returned to Mrs. Fortescue's.

The next morning they bade the good Major farewell, and proceeded with Mrs. Fortescue to the convent. They were received

in the parlor by the superior, a tall, majestic woman, who was distinguished from the other nuns by the imposing stateliness of her carriage, and by a long rosary of gold beads, to which was attached a cross of considerable value. She received the new comers in the most gracious manner, paid them a few flattering, but delicate compliments, and then summoned Sophie to the grate to welcome her friends. After a little more conversation, the inner door of the convent was opened, and Mrs. Fortescue bade her young charges farewell on the threshold. Emily and Lydia could not repress a shudder of apprehension, as they embraced this kind friend, and then watched her retreating steps; but Caroline and Sophie were joyfully locked in each other's arms, and Henrietta and Julia seemed delighted at the novelty of their situation.

When Mrs. Fortescue was no longer visible, the ponderous door was shut and secured by the portress with the greatest care. Emily's heart involuntarily sank within her, as she listened to the creaking and grating of the massive bolts and bars; again she shuddered, and clasped her hands in silent prayer. Lydia seemed not less startled by the ominous sound; she stooped suddenly, and looked as if she was determined to go back; then, conquering her emotion by a strong effort, grasped Emily's hand with almost convulsive energy, and proceeded. Even the two little girls were terrified for a moment, and clung to their cousin, as if for protection. The gloomy aspect of the cloisters and corridors through which they passed, was not calculated to cheer their spirits, and they tremblingly followed the steps of the *supérieure* and Sophie, with whom Caroline was engaged in earnest conversation. At length, however, they were shown into two apartments, of a somewhat more pleasing description. They were small, and scantily furnished as bed-rooms; but they overlooked a garden of considerable size and great beauty, and commanded a rather extensive view of a rich and varied landscape. The first room was intended for Caroline, the other for Emily and Lydia. Henrietta and Julia were to sleep in a larger room, which was already occupied by several other boarders.

"I think," said the *supérieure*, with an evident attempt at condescension, "you will find everything here that is necessary for your accommodation; and we have an excellent library, from which I shall be happy to lend you books, whenever you feel inclined to read. In the mean time, as soon as you have taken off your bonnets, I shall introduce you to Miss Smithson, a countrywoman of yours, who takes the drawing department in the school, and also to Mrs. Brownlow, another English lady, who has now been a long time residing with us as a boarder."

The visitors bowed in acknowledgment, and followed the stately lady down stairs, to a school-room of large dimensions, in which were several young ladies of different ages, and two or three of the

nuns, whose task it was to preside over their studies. To these they were presented, as well as to Miss Smithson; but they could not help observing how differently they were received by these ladies. The nuns were kind and affable, while Miss Smithson's manner was cold, haughty, and even contemptuous. The pupils greeted them with a general stare, and they were glad when they followed the supérieure out of the room. She led them into the garden, where she again introduced them to Mrs. Brownlow, a pleasing elderly lady, whose address immediately prepossessed them in her favor. Soon after *la mère Sainte Hélène*, the superior of the school, coming up to them, Madame la Supérieure resigned the new comers to her care, and, with a bow of lofty courtesy, retired.

They spent a part of the day with Mrs. Brownlow, from whom they learned a great many particulars respecting the establishment. This lady was a widow of small fortune, who had chosen the convent for her residence, on account of its cheapness, and its quiet seclusion. She was, however, a Protestant, at least in profession, though deeply tinctured with that fatal spirit of liberalism, which considers all religions as very nearly alike, or in themselves indifferent. On their inquiring the reason why Miss Smithson did not take the boarders to church, as she seemed to be engaged in the school, Mrs. Brownlow replied, that that lady was a Roman Catholic, having become one since her residence at the convent, whither she had been sent for her education.

Emily inquired whether this was not frequently the consequence of being educated there.

"Very frequently," replied Mrs. Brownlow, "and it can scarcely be otherwise, when children are sent hither, without any one to take care of them. The nuns are very skilful in making converts, and the Catholic ceremonies very well calculated to captivate the minds of young people. There are two or three little girls here, who are nearly converted, and they are the only Protestants in the convent, except one young lady of about thirteen, who has not been long here, and is indisposed to-day. The others are all children of Roman Catholic parents."

"I should think," observed Emily, "that you, madame, might have some influence in counteracting the ill-effects produced on the minds of these poor children."

"Oh, dear, no!" replied Mrs. Brownlow, "I am no bigot,—I never interfere. I have no doubt the Catholics are as sincere as ourselves, in the exercise of their religion; there are good and bad people in all religions; and I believe that all those who act up conscientiously to the best of their knowledge, will be equally accepted by God."

"But, my dear madam," observed Emily, "God has revealed his will explicitly in his Word, and if we see our fellow-creatures

in danger of being misled, by a system which is directly opposed to that word, by which he himself has declared 'we shall be judged at the last day,'—is it not our duty to endeavor, at least, to warn them against the delusion?"

"Well?" replied Mrs. Brownlow, "it is no business of mine to examine into the merits of the different systems. I dislike bigotry, and have the greatest horror of controversy. If people will expose their children to the danger of error, they must take the consequences. I would not interfere on any account, and I strongly advise you not to attempt it either, for I assure you it would be taken very ill."

"The Roman Catholics, then," observed Lydia, "are not so indifferent on the subject; for, by your account of the matter, they are very anxious to make proselytes."

"Oh! yes, they are indeed,—they do everything they can, without absolutely infringing on the liberty of the children. But the greatest bigot in the house is decidedly Miss Smithson,—indeed, she is almost beyond endurance. She is perfectly furious against Protestantism, and cannot even speak of it without abuse. The only way to be at peace with her, is never to mention the subject, either to her, or in her hearing."

The conversation was now interrupted, by their being summoned to dinner. They took this meal in a large hall, with the rest of the boarders, and the whole *communauté* of nuns, about thirty in number. All conversation was prevented, during the repast, by one of the nuns reading aloud, from a book containing the lives of several saints of the Romish church. The pupils were then allowed to play or walk in the garden for an hour, and saw no more of the nuns till supper, with the exception of those whose peculiar province it was to attend to the school duties. There were four in number,—la mère Sainte Hélène, la mère Sainte Euphrasie, la sœur Sainte Anne, and la sœur Constance. The two former were somewhat advanced in life; sister St. Anne was a blooming, lively girl, of eighteen, who took charge of the younger pupils; and sister Constance immediately struck Emily and Lydia, as being peculiarly interesting in her appearance. She was apparently about twenty, her form slight and fragile, and the delicacy of her complexion indicated a precarious state of health. There was an expression of thoughtfulness, and melancholy sweetness, in her countenance, which at once touched the heart, and riveted the affections. She was much beloved by the pupils, and seemed to be stationed among them, principally on account of the influence she always acquired over their minds.

In the course of the afternoon, Lydia formed an acquaintance with Miss Somers, the English girl she had not seen that morning. She seemed amiable and gentle, though, as might naturally be expected, devoid of everything like religious principle. She

had been about three months at the convent, and gave the new comers much information, concerning the discipline and habits of the society in which they were now to move.

They again met the nuns at supper, when the reading was resumed; and they were then obliged to kneel, during the recitation of a long string of prayers, similar to those they had been in the habit of hearing at Madame d'Elfort's. The sleeping apartments of the boarders, who were seventeen in number, occupied one side of the square which composed the convent, and were directly over the lower apartments appropriated to the school. They ran along a corridor of considerable length, separated from the other side of the building by a door of massive strength. The two elder nuns slept one at each end of this corridor, in small cells similar to those of the other *religieuses*, and furnished only with a hard mattress, a chair, and a small table, on which were placed a crucifix and an hour-glass.

Emily's rest was disturbed several times during the night, by hearing the nuns going to, and returning from, their nocturnal services, in the chapel. Her reflections were painful, and tended greatly to depress her mind; but on rising in the morning, she and Lydia, after earnest prayer, arranged a plan of affectionate *surveillance* over Caroline, Henrietta, and Julia.

They now commenced their studies in regular order, though the three elder cousins were only a few hours each day in the school-room. Emily and Lydia were delighted to find that they were to be under the tuition of sister Constance for Italian, music, and embroidery, as it would give them frequent opportunities of conversing with this interesting nun, whose appearance and manners had made so pleasing an impression on their minds; and they were not disappointed in the hopes they had entertained respecting her character. She became every day more endearing to their hearts, and seemed to return their attachment with answering affection. There was much in her that reminded Emily of her beloved friend, Rose; and the deep fervor of her religious feelings was evidently heightened by the consciousness that, for her, the things of time would soon pass away, and give place to the solemn, the momentous realities of eternity. Emily felt for her a sympathy and tenderness she could not express; and often would a sigh escape her, as she thought of the darkness and error that shrouded a mind, which seemed panting for the glorious light and liberty of the gospel.

They saw little of the other nuns, although they constantly dined and supped with them in the refectory. Their hours of recreation were different, and they, therefore, never met them in the garden at that time; but they could see them from their bed-room windows, and Emily, Caroline, and Lydia, were indulged by the *supérieure* with permission to join them sometimes in their garden-

walks. Of this privilege Caroline always availed herself to converse with her friend Sophie; but Emily and Lydia, having but little knowledge of any one there, seldom entered the garden at that time. They sometimes met with one or two of the nuns in the corridors, gliding along with a swiftness and silence, that gave a peculiar air of mystery and romance to the *rencontre*; but farther than these occasional meetings, their acquaintance did not extend; and they knew as little of what passed in the house, beyond the immediate precincts of the school department, as if they had resided in a totally different building. They could not help noticing, sometimes, that one or other of the nuns was absent from the public meals, and that, perhaps, for several days; and they conjectured that some penance imposed, or punishment inflicted, might be the cause of their seclusion. They frequently saw them kneeling for hours together in the chapel, and knew that they were sometimes obliged to remain there the whole night; but what the faults were, for which they were thus required to atone, or what were the internal management and economy of the convent, they were totally ignorant. A thousand acts of oppression, of tyranny, and even cruelty, might have been perpetrated within these walls, without being known to any, but their actors and their victims. The dungeons might have been filled with miserable captives, and the unhappy objects of persecution dragged to the most horrible fate, without one groan of suffering, or one shriek of terror, penetrating the solid walls and ponderous doors of this immense building. Emily shuddered, as she thought of this, and prayed that her cousins might be preserved from the delusions of a system, which gloried in annihilating the strongest ties of nature, and profaned the sacred name of religion, by associating it with cruelty and oppression.

CHAPTER XXX.

CONVENT SCENES.

To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them—ISAIAH. viii. 20.

THE cousins had stipulated, before they entered the convent, that they should be allowed to attend the Protestant chapel every Sunday morning. This had not been granted without difficulty, as

the boarders at St. Anne's were required to join in the services of the convent chapel. But Emily and Lydia were firm in their resolution, and the point was, at length, conceded, with the understanding that Mrs. Fortescue, or Mrs. Brownlow, should always be their companions. The last-named lady expressed great surprise at this permission, and considerable doubt as to its being continued; and Clara Somers informed Lydia that she, and several other young ladies, had been promised, on their first coming, the liberty of going to see some friends every second Sunday, in order that they might attend the English chapel; but that this promise had since been withdrawn, and they had been compelled to join in the Roman Catholic service. Emily and Lydia felt some alarm at this intelligence; but they had, as yet, had no reason to distrust the word of the supérieure, and therefore only resolved to be doubly on their guard. Henrietta and Julia had, hitherto, been allowed to absent themselves from the daily mass in the chapel, and to decline joining in anything that was contrary to the principles in which they had been brought up, though all the other Protestant children were subject to the same rules as the Roman Catholics. How long this exemption might be continued, it was impossible to determine; but, for the present, no undue control was exercised over them.

The Sunday came, and they were allowed to go to chapel with Mrs. Brownlow. They saw Mrs. Fortescue for a few minutes, and she promised to visit them in the course of the week. They then returned to St. Anne's, and Emily availed herself of the afternoon to give some religious instruction to Henrietta and Julia. All the Protestants then assembled in the garden, and had a great deal of conversation, which Emily endeavored to direct to profitable subjects.

It was truly deplorable to witness the absolute influence which had been obtained over the minds of these little girls. Clara Somers was the only one who seemed dissatisfied with the yoke laid upon her. Two of the others were orphans, and the third an officer's daughter, whose parents had removed to another town. They were entirely under the spiritual control of the nuns and their confessor, and going through the regular routine of a Popish education.

Fanny and Mary Lowe, the orphans, were eight and nine years of age, and Ellen Wilton was about ten. Their extreme youth gave the most decided advantage to the priests and nuns; and certainly no pains were spared to improve it to the utmost. It was probably owing to her being somewhat older, and of a more independent character, that Clara Somers manifested less docility than they did. She was too old to be enticed with sweetmeats, pictures, and *bon-bons*; and having discovered that there was a scheme formed, of which she was the object, her pride was alarm-

ed, and her spirit roused to resistance. It could not be the result of principle, for the poor girl was entirely ignorant on the subject of religion, and could not give any reason for her aversion to Popery; but so providentially was this feeling overruled for her preservation, that while her young companions were conducted every morning to the confessor's room, while he was at breakfast, and there bribed, with presents and caresses, to listen to his instructions, and promise obedience to all his directions, neither threats nor promises could induce her to go further in compliance than was absolutely required by the rules of the school.

All this she told Emily and Lydia, and added, that the nuns were now earnestly engaged in preparing the three little ones for auricular confession, to which they were to be admitted in a few weeks.

"They have done all they could," added Clara, "to persuade me to confess also; but I will never do it, though they have threatened to compel me. Papa is now travelling, but I expect him back shortly; and when I tell him of the way in which they have behaved, I am sure he will take me away immediately."

Emily and Lydia, of course, encouraged her in her resolutions, and endeavored to make it a matter of principle with her, by pointing out some of the most glaring errors of Popery, and showing her how utterly incompatible they were with the doctrines of Scripture. But, to their great surprise and sorrow, they found that poor Clara had not a Bible, and, indeed, scarcely knew what kind of a book it was!

Caroline was now a source of the greatest anxiety to her sister and cousin. They had tried in vain, since their arrival at the convent, to win her attention to what they earnestly wished her to engage in,—a candid examination of the points in dispute, by the unerring light of Scripture. But as soon as the subject was introduced, she always contrived to evade it; and when, at length, after some weeks' fruitless trial, Emily solemnly and affectionately entreated her to turn her attention to it, and to lay aside all evasion and subterfuge, she openly declared her determination not to enter into any discussion, adding, that she should consider it as a personal favor, not to be any longer importuned on the subject.

Emily and Lydia, with a deep-drawn sigh, gave up the subject, but resolved to write a second time to Mr. Howard, and to urge upon him, with still greater earnestness and entreaty, the necessity of his exerting his authority to remove them from a sphere so imminently dangerous. They were still more anxious for the success of their application, from observing that Caroline was gradually adopting many customs inconsistent with a profession of Protestantism, and had sanctioned her younger sisters' being required to use the sign of the cross in the school-room, to attend mass in the morning, and conform to all the usages to which the

other boarders were subjected. Since Caroline had thus decided, Emily and Lydia could not interfere; but many were the tears they shed, fervent the prayers they offered up for Divine interposition, and urgent the entreaties they forwarded to Mr. Howard, that he would hasten to rescue his children from the perils which on every side surrounded them. No letters had been received from him since their return to S—, and every succeeding day increased their uneasiness on his account, as well as their own.

In the mean time, Emily had to endure many violent attacks from Miss Smithson, the English teacher of drawing. That lady began by attempting to throw every species of ridicule on Protestantism and the Reformation, and to blacken the character of the Reformers.

"Where was your religion," she triumphantly inquired, "before the time of Henry the Eighth? And what was it which led him to forsake the true church? Only the criminal passion he entertained for Anna Boleyn, and the wish to rid himself of his unoffending wife, that he might be enabled to gratify it! A worthy motive, truly, for inventing a new religion! Surely, you have no reason to be proud of the origin of Protestantism, or the character of its notorious founder."

"Henry the Eighth was not the founder of Protestantism," replied Emily, "he was but the instrument of establishing what had existed many centuries before him. He was a wicked, cruel, unprincipled tyrant, without any sentiment of religion, or restraint of moral feeling. But the Protestant cause is not to be identified with him; a host of glorious witnesses had long before attested its truth, and many of them had sealed their testimony with their blood. I need not remind you of the venerable Wickliffe and his followers, or of the persecuted Vaudois and Albigenes; indeed, there have always been, since the introduction of Popery, some faithful Christians, who have *protested* against its errors. And when you speak of the bad motives of Henry, you should not forget that, if *he* was actuated by them, his people were not; nor were the multitudes in other countries, who embraced the reformed faith. They cannot be attributed to Luther, to Calvin, Melancthon, or to 'the noble army of martyrs,'—to Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and Bradford, and the blessed company of others, who 'loved not their lives unto the death,' but suffered the most cruel persecutions for the truth, and finally 'resisted unto blood.'"

"Oh! pray," exclaimed Miss Smithson contemptuously, "do not bring forward your Reformers as authority; your Luther, Calvin, and company, were men of the very worst character, and most shameful conduct. I will lend you their lives to read, and also a history of the Reformation, which shows it in its true light; and I am sure you will then be ashamed to acknowledge the men of whom you have now so high an opinion."

"Excuse me, Miss Smithson, but I will not read the books you mention. I have read the lives of the Reformers, as written by historians of undoubted veracity, and historical accounts of the Reformation, from the pens of impartial narrators. I believe the Reformers to have been men of like passions with others, and but lately emerged from a state of great darkness; but, as far as the weakness and infirmities of human nature, and the partial obscurity of remaining error, would allow, sincerely desirous to promote the glory of God, and to glorify Him themselves by a holy life and conversation. But, even supposing they had all been as worthless as you would insinuate, and as I confess Henry the Eighth was, that circumstance would in no wise affect the truth of Protestantism; for it is not founded on the character of its promoters, but on the sure word of God."

A laugh of derision was, for some time, Miss Smithson's only answer. At length she offered to lend Emily Bossuet's "*Character of the Catholic Religion*," which, she was sure, could hardly fail of convincing her.

"I have read," replied Emily, "a work which, I suppose, is very similar,—'*Le Génie du Christianisme*,' by that celebrated and highly talented author, Châteaubriand; but all the splendor of his eloquence has failed to convince me of the truth of his assertions, or the solidity of his reasoning. It was lent me by Madame Dorville, in the hope that it might produce an impression favorable to your church; but it only served to show me how dangerous is the system, which he so warmly and so ingeniously advocates."

"You Protestants are all unreasonable," exclaimed Miss Smithson, impatiently, "you look at everything through the colored spectacles of partiality and prejudice."

"I am willing," replied Emily, "to read anything in the shape of temperate argument, provided it is supported by scripture evidence; but, without that, I will admit no assertion, however bold or positive. Will you examine the subject with me, by the light of that unerring guide?"

This proposal Miss Smithson scornfully declined, and then proceeded to rail against the Protestant religion, its doctrines, and its ministers, in terms so unmeasured, so violent and abusive, that Emily was at length obliged to stop her.

"Miss Smithson," she said, with mild, but firm dignity, "in every conversation we have had on this subject, I have studied to express myself in the most respectful terms I could possibly apply to your religion; I have carefully avoided every word that could give you offence, or wound your feelings, even in the slightest degree. You must, therefore, excuse me, if I remind you, that I have a right to expect the same delicacy from you, and that I cannot listen to such language as you are now using. Allow

me, also, to say, that invective is not argument, and that violence is always a sign of a weak or a bad cause."

This rebuke, for the present, checked Miss Smithson's volubility; but she renewed her attacks with such frequency and vehemence, that Lydia one day told her "if her object was to make converts, she did not employ the proper method to attain it."

In the meantime, the influence of the nuns over Caroline seemed daily to increase. Emily and Lydia now saw her but seldom, and she sedulously avoided all conversation with them. How far she herself conformed to the idolatrous practices of the house, it was not easy to ascertain; but it was quite evident that she concurred with the nuns in subjecting her two younger sisters to all the tyranny of popish observances. To add to these causes of uneasiness, no news whatever were received from Mr. Howard; and, though Caroline was too much absorbed by other subjects to bestow much thought on this unaccountable silence of her father, the anxiety of Emily and Lydia began to assume the tone of serious alarm. Again the former wrote, in terms, if possible, still more pressing; and they awaited the success of this third application, with feelings amounting almost to agony.

The only enjoyment that now remained to them, was the privilege of hearing the gospel at the chapel on the Sunday morning, and sometimes spending an hour afterwards with Major and Mrs. Fortescue. These were opportunities which they highly prized, and no opposition had as yet been made to their going; but Caroline now began to absent herself from the Protestant services, and to keep Henrietta and Julia also away, under various pretexts.

Mrs. Fortescue called occasionally to see them at the grate; but their conversations were never suffered to be long, and were generally interrupted by the entrance of some of the nuns. On one of these occasions, la mère Saint Euphrasie informed that lady that, as she had long expressed a wish to witness the ceremony of taking the veil, she might soon have this desire gratified; as there were soon to be admitted two new sisters,—the one to take the white or novice's veil, the other the black.

Mrs. Fortescue thanked the nun for her information, and, as that day was to be a grand holiday in the house, requested that her young friends might be permitted to spend it with her. This permission was granted by the supérieure, but Caroline declined the invitation, alleging that she wished to pass the day with Sophie. It was, therefore, settled that Emily should join Mrs. Fortescue in the chapel on that morning, and, after witnessing the ceremony, they should take Lydia, Henrietta, and Julia, with them to the Major's pleasant residence.

The nun who was to make what is called her *profession*, or, in other words, to assume the black veil, the symbol of perpetual seclusion, was about thirty years of age, and was called *la sœur Ma-*

rie. Emily had often seen her among the novices, though she had never spoken to her; but who the other intended nun was, no one but the supérieure seemed to know. Great preparations were making for the exhibition; the nuns were all busily employed, some about the chapel, some about the altar, and sister Marie herself underwent a long course of fastings, prayers, and mortifications, some self-inflicted, others prescribed by the confessor, by way of preparation for the approaching event. The chapel was tastefully ornamented with flowers, wax tapers, and everything costly that the community could command. The altar was decorated with several beautiful specimens of gold and silver embroidery, and Sophie's time was much taken up with practising on the organ a splendid piece of music, in which she was to be accompanied by the voices of the whole sisterhood.

Great curiosity was excited, by the uncertainty that prevailed with regard to the person who was to perform the other part in this melancholy drama; but the supérieure was not communicative, and the whole affair remained involved in mystery. On the evening preceding the ceremony, however, a travelling-carriage stopped at the convent-gate, and a young lady was handed out by an elderly gentleman, who, after taking a formal leave of her, re-entered the vehicle, and immediately departed. The stranger was conducted to a room which had been prepared for her, and was not seen again that evening by any but the supérieure, who had a very long interview with her. Nothing was known concerning her, except that she came from Tours, was unaccompanied by a single relative or friend, and a total stranger in the place which was now to be her residence for life. Even her face had not been seen, for it was shrouded in a long mourning veil.

Early on the ensuing morning the whole convent was in a bustle. The two future nuns were at the confessional by break of day, and after a long interview with the priest, again retired to their rooms. The stranger was then attended by the nuns appointed to dress her for the occasion, and the sisters who took charge of the school were also employed in attiring the boarders, that they might form a pleasing group in the pageant.

Emily repaired to the chapel about eight o'clock, and was soon after joined by Major and Mrs. Fortescue, with whom she remained in conversation for some time, during which time the chapel gradually filled with English gentlemen and ladies, whom curiosity had drawn to witness the ceremony. There were a few French persons behind, but they were generally of the lowest class of society. Emily and Mrs. Fortescue stationed themselves near the railings in front of the altar, and awaited the entrance of the procession with feelings of lively interest.

At last, some of those children known by the name of *enfants de chœur*, appeared from the inner room, and began to strew the

space around the altar with rose-leaves, from baskets which were suspended round their necks by rose-colored ribbons. They were dressed in a kind of white surplice, with a girdle of ribbon.

They were followed by several priests, with their acolytes, who ranged themselves round the altar; after which, the door of the *ante-chœur*, or nuns' inner chapel, was opened, and the voices of the sisterhood were heard, chanting a hymn, as they slowly entered in procession. They had lighted tapers in their hands, and, with their peculiar dress, and long flowing veils, presented a striking *coup-d'œil*, the effect of which was not a little heightened by the music. The novices came behind, and after them the boarders. Every nun bent the knee for a moment on the lower step of the altar, and they then seated themselves round it. The two candidates for the veil were then brought forward, and placed in the midst, exactly in front of the altar. Every eye was instantly fixed upon them. Sister Marie, however, attracted but little attention; her look was calm, her demeanor composed, and it was evident that the step she was about to take was the result of deliberate choice.

But not so the young stranger who was on the point of becoming a novice. She had, from the first, excited much curiosity, and that feeling was now converted into one of painful interest. She was an elegant young woman of two-and-twenty, and attired as a bride, in a white muslin dress, a cap tastefully ornamented with satin and ribbon, and a large and rich lace veil, which was thrown over her head. Her fine dark hair was braided on her forehead, and a *boquet* of rosebuds had been placed in her hand. But all this finery only served to render more striking the death-like paleness of her cheek, and the expression of deep and hopeless anguish on her countenance. She had not long been seated before the altar, when the supérieure, perceiving that she was near fainting, found it necessary to have her re-conducted into the *ante-chœur*, where she remained till she was sufficiently recovered to return to the chapel. When at length she was again supported to her place, the hearts of the Protestant spectators were deeply affected by her appearance. There was not the slightest tinge of color in her face, and the livid whiteness of her quivering lips denoted the most distressing agitation. She seemed scarcely conscious of what she did, and looked indeed like the helpless victim adorned for a sacrifice.

Several priests were in attendance, but it was the confessor of the convent on whom devolved the duty of performing the ceremony. He was an Irishman, of the name of Saville, and of a peculiarly stern and unprepossessing countenance. He now began to celebrate the gorgeous ceremony of the mass, with all its pomp and splendor, and undisguised idolatry. At its conclusion, a sermon was preached to the two candidates, in which much

false reasoning and unscriptural doctrine was employed, to convince them, and the spectators, that the step they were now taking was a highly meritorious one, and would most certainly ensure them uninterrupted happiness on earth, and a reward of transcendent glory in heaven.

When this specious oration was finished, Sister Marie was conducted by the supérieure to the altar, and kneeling on the lowest step, was addressed by the priest in Latin. As the act of taking the vows is considered in the light of a marriage, and the victim as the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to keep up the blasphemous idea, she is provided with two bride's-maids. This office was performed by Ellen Wilton and Fanny Lowe, dressed in white, with rose-colored ribbons, and large *boquets* of flowers. They stood on each side of her, while she repeated the vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience,—that irrevocable vow which bound her to perpetual seclusion, and separated her for ever from all the social ties and endearing charities of life.

The priest then blessed the black veil, which was lying on a table before him, and the supérieure placed it on her head, substituting it for the novice's white one, which was now laid aside. After this, many prayers were chanted and recited, the priest blessed her several times, and the organ sent forth its sweetest tones, to welcome the new nun to her joyless sphere of existence.

She then laid herself down at the foot of the altar, and a funeral pall was thrown over her, to signify that she was entirely dead to the world, and to all the relations of society. Two burning wax tapers were placed at her head, and two at her feet, in the manner done to a corpse, and her two little bride's maids strewed the pall all over with roses. While she lay in this posture, perfectly motionless, and shrouded in the pall, the sisterhood sang her funeral hymn in Latin, in tones so sweetly mournful, accompanied by the thrilling notes of the organ, now swelling in solemn majesty of sound, then gradually sinking into strains of plaintive melody, that every ear was fascinated, and every eye moistened with the tears of excited feeling. At the end of about ten minutes, the music seemed to die away in a lengthened cadence of exquisite softness, and a short pause ensued, during which the audience appeared scarcely to breathe. The new nun was then assisted to rise from her death-like posture; the organ made the chapel resound with a triumphant anthem of joy, in which the deep voices of the priests joined the softer strains of the female singers; and sister Marie was conducted by the supérieure to take her place among the sisterhood.

The whole of this performance was evidently intended, and certainly well calculated, to captivate the senses, and produce a powerful impression on the mind, in favor of the Popish church in

general, and a conventual life in particular; nor did it altogether fail of its effect on those who then witnessed it. The remaining part of the drama, however, was fated to dissolve the charm, and create feelings which could not but serve as an antidote to the subtle poison so skilfully administered.

The young lady was now brought forward, and every heart seemed to throb with painful emotion, as the interesting girl knelt before the altar, and, with suppressed feelings, meekly awaited her fate. A lighted taper was taken from the altar, and put into her hand. The priest then asked her in French, "*Ma fille, que demandez-vous ?*" Her answer to this question was in a prescribed form, but pronounced in so low and faint a voice, that the words could not be distinguished. It seemed, however, that they contained the expression of a wish to become a *religieuse*, for he again addressed her,—“ Daughter, is it by your own free will, that you now devote yourself to God ?” She falteringly replied in the affirmative, and he then asked her two more questions,—“ whether she had made herself sufficiently acquainted with the duties and regulations of the life she was about to embrace ? and whether she was resolved to persevere in it, even to the end of her life ?” Her faint and scarcely-uttered replies sealed her dedication, and she was then led into the *ante-chœur*, to have her hair cut off, and to assume the dress of the order. She seemed scarcely able to stand, and, as she was supported out of the chapel, the utter wretchedness depicted on her pallid countenance struck a chill of horror to every heart. While her bridal dress, the mockery, rather than the expression, of joy, was being removed, and her beautiful hair mercilessly cut off, the other nuns filled up the interval with chantings and recitatives. At length she was led back to the altar, clothed in the black woollen robe, the small close cap and bandeau, and a small cloth veil over her head.

She seemed to have, in a great measure, conquered her agitation; the mournful calmness of forced resignation had succeeded to the traces of conflicting feelings; but the marble paleness of her countenance, and the touching sadness of its expression, appealed with irresistible power to the hearts of the pitying spectators.

Kneeling once more on the steps of the altar, she was solemnly blessed by the priest, who presented her with the consecrated girdle, to which were attached the rosary and cross, and which the *supérieure* fastened round her waist. Her cloth veil was then taken off, and replaced by a large muslin one, and, while the *supérieure* was carefully arranging it in long, graceful folds, the priest addressed her in Latin, and again gave her his blessing.

The *supérieure* now left her kneeling on the highest steps of the altar, and she was expected to sing a hymn, accompanied only by the organ. She made one or two ineffectual attempts to raise her

voice; but, finding herself unequal to the task, arose, with the sudden impulse of uncontrollable feeling, and rushed precipitately down the steps. The supérieure, alarmed at her evident emotion, hastened towards her, and, taking her hand in a soothing manner, made a sign to sister Marie to join her. She was again led up to the highest step, and they then sang together; but the low and faltering accents of the novice were lost in the more assured tones of her companion. The nuns soon after joined in the anthem, and the voices of the priests completed the chorus, which was closed by a grand *finale* from the deep-toned organ. The victim of this cruel sacrifice had now recovered her composure, and was led by the supérieure toward the nuns, whom she embraced individually, in token of her being now a member of the sisterhood.

Thus ended this most painful ceremony. Painful, indeed, it must have been to every feeling mind; and this was sufficiently attested, by the indignation depicted on the countenances of the English gentlemen in the chapel, and the tears of sorrow and compassion shed by many of the ladies. It must be distressing under any circumstances, to see a young person thus buried in a cloister,—lost to all the endearing ties of society, and the prospect of future usefulness. But, in the present case, it was more than usually painful;—it was made heart-rending, by the impression that the sacrifice was not a voluntary one. Whatever the circumstances might have been, which compelled this young lady thus to immure herself in the joyless seclusion of a convent, it was evident that her heart revolted from it, and that her situation was one that deserved the tenderest pity.

It was true, she might retract her vows, when her year of probation was expired; that is, the law would authorize her in renouncing the monastic life, and reclaiming her liberty, at the end of her noviciate, if she chose to avail herself of its protection. But it is the interest of every person in the convent, to retain within its walls all those who have been admitted into the community; it was most probable that every impediment would be thrown in the way of her obtaining her liberation; and who can doubt the power of a supérieure, in a place where everything is subject to her will, where no person has a right to interfere with her authority, and where not even one word of information can be either given or received, without her knowledge and sanction?

But, even supposing that she could succeed in conquering every difficulty, and surmounting every obstacle,—nothing but obloquy and contempt would await her in the world, should she dare to return to it. She would be shunned by every correct Roman Catholic, and excluded from all respectable society, as an apostate nun,—a person devoid of principle, and who had been guilty of a breach of the most solemn obligations.

Those fatal bonds are, therefore, but too sure, and humanity

must weep at the lot of an unfortunate being, thus condemned to unwilling seclusion, "with all the gloomy trifles of a convent (as a pious modern writer* expresses it), to intervene between her soul and that God, whom to know is life, and light, and joy, and peace."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.—1 TIM. ii. 5.

THE cruel sacrifice was completed. The veil was dropped for ever, between the youthful victim, and that world in which she seemed so well fitted to shine; and the English ladies who had witnessed the ceremony, prepared to depart, with hearts oppressed with the most genuine feelings of compassion. The gentlemen who had been present had long since left the chapel,—some wearied out by the length of the performance, and others unable any longer to restrain their feelings of pity and indignation. Among the foremost of these was Major Fortescue, whose manly feelings and Christian principles equally revolted from the scene.

But the sentiments of regret and abhorrence, so visible in the countenances of the spectators, so different from the favorable impression which it had been hoped the exhibition would make on their minds, had not been unnoticed by the officiating priest. It had, as might be supposed, excited his utmost wrath; and he could not let the Protestants withdraw, without venting his displeasure on them, in a public manner. When, therefore, the ceremony was concluded, he addressed them in the following terms:—

"We are going to administer the blessing of the holy sacrament, and I request all Protestants immediately to retire. And let them take notice, that, in future, whenever any ceremony shall take place in this chapel, the doors shall be closed against them. They ought never to enter our churches, if they do not know how to conduct themselves more respectfully, during the celebration of our holy mysteries. Why should they come, merely to gratify their curiosity? We never attend their preaching-meetings,—

* Miss Kennedy.

God forbid that we should, indeed! for what could we hear there, but falsehood and blasphemy?"

Much more did the father utter, of bitter invectives, and unsparing abuse of the Protestant faith; but the English ladies, terrified by his enraged manner and violent gestures, precipitately left the chapel, while he continued to thunder out his anathemas against them until they were out of sight. It is most probable that, had the gentlemen still been present, the vindictive priest would not have ventured thus openly to insult them; especially as no cause whatever had been given for so unwarrantable an attack. The most perfect silence and decorum had been observed by the English throughout the whole ceremony; which was not the case with the few French persons present, several of whom had behaved very improperly. But the Protestants had not knelt, nor bowed their faces to the earth, during the elevation of the host; and this, which in itself was an unpardonable crime in the eyes of the Papists, had been still farther aggravated, by the expression of indignation at the sacrifice, and compassion for the helpless victim of spiritual tyranny, which could not have escaped the observation of Father Saville. He had, therefore, seized the moment when he thought he could, without fear of retaliation, vent his rage on the Protestants.

Mrs. Fortescue and Emily went to the door of the convent, and, on being joined by Lydia, Henrietta, and Julia, proceeded to the town, where they found the gentlemen assembled in the English reading-room. They had gone thither, to wait for their wives, sisters, and daughters, and were now discussing the intelligence communicated by the terrified ladies on their arrival. Some were of opinion that the British consul should be called upon to interfere; others talked of complaining to the English government, of the insult offered to British subjects; but the ladies, with one voice, requested that the affair might go no further; and it was, at length, agreed, though not without some difficulty, that the priest's conduct should be passed over in contemptuous silence.

After a pleasant day, spent with Major and Mrs. Fortescue, the cousins unwillingly returned to the gloomy walls of the convent, and the next day resumed their studies as usual. But Emily and Lydia had many a hard-fought conflict with Miss Smithson, who insisted that the conduct of the Protestants in the chapel had fully warranted Father Saville in his violent animadversions upon them. This young lady's manner of attempting to make a convert was, indeed, anything but attractive, or likely to succeed. The nuns in the school were wiser; they confined their endeavors, with the elder pupils, to casual observations on the beauty, sanctity, and blessedness of their religion; or short exhortations, delivered in a kind and caressing manner, calculated to mislead the judgment, and ensnare the warm affections of youth. With the younger

children, however, they were not so scrupulous, as will be seen from the following circumstances, which occurred soon after.

It will be recollected that Clara Somers had told Emily that the priest and nuns were very busy, preparing the three little girls for confession; that they had for some time been using every means to induce her also to comply with this ordinance of their church; but that she had declared her determination never to do so. Now that the bustle, occasioned by the late important ceremonies, had subsided, the sisters renewed their efforts with redoubled zeal, and a day was appointed for admitting them to the confessional. Over little Fanny and Mary Lowe they had long exercised the most unbounded influence, and they were, therefore, sure of them; but with Ellen Wilton, and especially Clara, much skilful management was still necessary to carry their point. The former, indeed, was tolerably tractable; but the latter, as yet, continued proof against both their caresses and their threats.

They were conducted every morning to Father Saville's breakfast-room, where Ellen was easily bribed, by presents of cakes and sweetmeats, to promise whatever he required.

"Now tell me, my sweet little girls," said the priest to them, the morning before the day appointed for the confession, "are you quite resolved to become good Catholics to-morrow, and to enter that church in which alone you can hope for salvation?"

"Yes, father," replied Ellen, sipping, with much satisfaction, a cup of *café-au-lait*, which he had given her.

"Let me hear you repeat your *Confiteor*, your *Pater*, and your *Ave*, my child."

The little girl did so, and he patted her head in approbation.

"You will come to me at the confessional, then, by nine o'clock to-morrow morning, and be careful to prepare yourself beforehand, by calling to your remembrance every sin you can possibly recollect?"

"I will, father," said the docile Ellen, as she took from his hand a box of *bouillons*, and a cluster of tempting raisins.

The priest extended his hand, and gave the child his blessing; then, turning to Clara, who had stood rather sullenly in a corner and refused his proffered gifts, he drew her gently to him, and tried the same arts upon her again.

"Father," said the candid Clara, "do not waste your gifts upon me, for I tell you again, as I have already done many times, that I will not confess, nor become a member of your church."

"But why not, my little perverse heretic?" inquired the father, hiding his impatience under an appearance of winning kindness. "Do you not know that, if you remain in your false religion, you must inevitably perish?"

"I cannot answer you, father, nor give you any other reason than this, that I have been brought up a Protestant, that my father

and all my family are Protestants, and that I will not change my religion to please any one."

"You are an obstinate little girl," said the father, with a portentous frown, "but, if milder measures will not do, you must be compelled to your duty. It is out of pure love and charity to your soul, that we do it; so, Mademoiselle, remember, I shall expect you at the confessional to-morrow."

"I will not come," said Clara, boldly; "you have no right to compel me, and I am sure papa will take me away from this place, as soon as he knows how I have been treated."

"We shall see, mademoiselle," said the priest, almost choked with passion; "in the mean time, retire to your own room, and I shall give orders that you are kept there till you choose to obey."

Clara retired, somewhat terrified by his menaces, but still resolved to persist in her refusal.

The priest had a conference with la mère Sainte Hélène, the directress of the school, who, in obedience to his orders, spent a great part of the day in endeavoring to soothe, persuade, or coax, the refractory Clara to submission. But her efforts were all unavailing, for, with a firmness and consistency indicative of great decision of character, the child continued to resist both promises and threats, and, to the great annoyance of the nun, remained unshaken in her determination.

The morning came, and Father Saville enshrined himself in the confessional. La mère Sainte Hélène was fully engaged in giving Ellen the last instructions preparatory to confession, and sister St. Anne was similarly occupied with Fanny and Mary. Sister Constance was, therefore, deputed to try a last attempt at persuading Clara, as the winning sweetness of her manner generally gave her great power over the minds of young persons. But, in this instance, the amiable nun exerted her influence in vain. Clara remained obstinately inflexible, and her instructors were reduced to despair.

In the meantime, Fanny and Mary were led to the confessional, and, after going through their parts in a manner that did great credit to their teachers, received the priest's absolution, and were dismissed with praises. It was now Ellen's turn, and she approached, though not without evincing some reluctance. She knelt, however, in the place appointed, at the side of the priest, and duly repeated the prescribed form,

"I confess to God Almighty, to the blessed Mary, always a virgin, to St. Michael the archangel, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter, St. Paul, and all the saints, and to you, my father, because I have greatly sinned, in thought, word, and deed. It is my fault,—it is my fault,—it is my very great fault;—wherefore, I pray the blessed Mary, always a virgin, St. Michael the archangel, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter, St. Paul, all the saints, and you, my father, to intercede for me with the Lord our God.

The child went through this blasphemous confession exactly in the manner she had been taught, crossing herself at the beginning and the end, and striking on her breast at the repetition of the words,—“It is my fault, it is my fault, it is my very great fault.”

The priest spoke a few words of approbation to her, and then began to question her as to the sins which he supposed she might have committed, such as disobedience to the nuns, quarrelling with her companions, lying or deceit, acts of childish dishonesty, excess in eating, passion, or evil tempers, idleness, inattention to her studies, neglect of religious observances, &c. &c. To most of these Ellen pleaded guilty. He then proceeded to examine her on the subject of her thoughts, feelings, and imaginations, and, in so doing, asked some questions which suggested ideas that had never before entered her mind, and some which it was happy for her that she did not understand. As far, however, as she comprehended them, she frankly acknowledged her faults, and detailed many little circumstances which were exceedingly amusing, from the childish simplicity with which they were told.

The confessor now asked her one more question,—“whether she could remember any other sin, which she had omitted in her previous confession?”

Ellen paused, as he imagined, to collect her thoughts; but observing that she did not reply, and that she seemed disconcerted, he repeated his question. At length she said, with some embarrassment,

“Yes, father, there is another sin which I have committed, but I cannot confess it.”

This sin, of which Ellen’s conscience accused her, was, her having sprinkled some soot and dust in the holy water, which was always kept in the *bénitier*, at the head of each bed, for the purpose of being used, morning and evening, to make the sign of the cross on the forehead. Her childish propensity to mischief had led her to do it, in order that she might enjoy the amusement of seeing la mère Sainte Hélène, and several of the young ladies, with black crosses on their foreheads. Inquiries had been made, to ascertain who was the culprit, but, as she denied it as positively as any of the others, all attempts had proved unsuccessful. Since then, however, the notions which had been instilled into her mind, had led her to consider this profane interference with so sacred a thing as holy water, as a very great crime. So perverted had been her ideas of right and wrong, that she thought it even a greater sin, than the falsehood of which she had been guilty, in order to conceal it. She had been taught to consider auricular confession as so solemn and important a duty, that she durst not tell another untruth, when the priest asked her if she had omitted any sin, but she was fully determined not to tell him what she had done

as she was persuaded that he would call it sacrilege, and punish her accordingly.

Father Saville was rather startled by her refusal, but endeavored, in the blandest manner he could assume, to overcome her reluctance.

"My daughter," said he, "you are fully aware, that it is your duty to confess *every* sin to your spiritual director. Tell me, therefore, what this sin is, in order that I may appoint you a gentle penance, and then give you absolution. Be assured that you will not find me a harsh or tyrannical judge; I promise not to be severe to you."

"Indeed, father, you must excuse me. I could not tell it you on any account. I am willing to do penance for it, but I *will not* tell you what it is."

He now suggested several sins, either of which, he thought, might be the one in question, and, when this method failed, endeavored to entangle her into an involuntary confession, by means of artful questions; but she had sufficient penetration to perceive his design, and remained equally proof against all his artifices and exhortations.

The father was both displeased and disconcerted, by the obstinacy of his young convert; but he did not wish to frighten her. A great point had been gained, by her coming to confession, and he wisely thought it best to go cautiously to work, and not press the subject too far at present. He, therefore, addressed her in his kindest manner,

"Well, my daughter, the holy church loves to imitate the example of the Great Shepherd, who is kind and indulgent to the lambs of his flock. I shall, therefore, take it for granted, as you assure me, that you are truly penitent for this great sin, whatever it may be, and shall not question you any further about it, trusting that you will, on some future occasion, see the necessity and benefit of freely divulging it to me. In the meantime, you will, as a slight penance, repeat, every morning and evening this week, fifteen Ave Marias, and six pater-nosters; and now I will give you absolution."

He did so, and Ellen was very glad to be dismissed; but she afterwards repeated the substance of their conversation to Emily, and was very much astonished, when the latter told her that the falsehood of which she had been guilty, in the transaction which she confessed to her, though she would not do so to the priest, was a much greater sin in the sight of God, than putting dust in the holy water.

Father Saville was now waiting for the refractory Clara, but all the exertions of the nuns had hitherto failed in persuading her to come. At length, their patience was exhausted, and the priest gave orders that she should be carried to the confessional. The

lay-sisters were accordingly called; and, though she struggled, screamed, and resisted with all her might, her prayers and tears were disregarded, and she was placed by force in the right hand division of the confessional. But it was in vain that the priest exhorted, entreated, or commanded her to confess. Her only answer was, "You have compelled me to come hither; but you cannot compel me to speak; I will never confess to you or to any one but God; and as soon as my father returns, he will remove me from the convent, for I shall certainly tell him how I have been treated by you all."

The father was almost convulsed with passion, but all his threats were unavailing; and, after spending a part of the morning in vainly endeavoring to conquer her determination, he at last ordered her back to her room, where he commanded her to be kept a close prisoner for the present.

Oh! how little do Protestant parents know, when they so far forget all Christian principle as to send their children to a convent for education, the evils to which they expose them, or the consequences that may result from their folly!

CHAPTER XXXII.

AN UNWELCOME GUEST.

He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house.—PSALM ci. 7.

THE excitement and agitation which poor Clara Somers had undergone, during the last month, and especially on the day of confession, had produced such an effect upon her nerves, that she was alarmingly ill the next morning. She was seized with a nervous fever, and became so delirious, that the physician who attended the convent was summoned in the evening, and the supérieure began to repent that she had gone so far in the case of a pupil. Her father, indeed, was absent, travelling on the continent, and might not return for some time; but it was probable that he would remove his daughter, as soon as he did return, and the nuns, therefore, resolved to obliterate, if possible, by kindness, the unfavorable impression produced on the mind of Clara, as the only possible means of averting the exposure they dreaded.

Clara was very ill for several days, but, at the end of that period, she began to recover rapidly. Before she was quite well, however, the unexpected arrival of her father came like a thunderbolt, to crush the hopes of the supérieure. She went down to the parlor to receive him, and informed him that his daughter had been some days indisposed, but that she hoped she would soon be quite recovered. Anxious to see his child, Mr. Somers proposed taking her in a carriage to his hotel, as he thought the change might do her good; but the supérieure, fearful of an interview, in the present state of Clara's mind, before she could win her to a promise of silence on the subject of the late events, hastily replied, that she was not well enough to be removed. He then entreated to be allowed to see his child, if only for two minutes, that he might be able to judge of her state, but was informed by the lady, with great dignity, that it was a permission not granted even to mothers, and, of course, still less to gentlemen. He was at length induced to take his leave, hoping to hear a better account on the morrow.

That evening the supérieure spent several hours with Clara endeavoring, by every blandishment she could devise, to captivate her affections, and eradicate any feeling of resentment that might still be lurking in her mind. She did not inform her of her father's arrival, resolving not to allow them to meet, till she had obtained a promise that every unpleasant occurrence should for ever be buried in oblivion.

The next morning, however, the anxious father presented himself at the gate of the convent, and inquired after his daughter's health. The portress, who did not expect him so early, and had received no orders, stammered, and was confused by his questions. At length, not knowing what answer to give, she requested him to walk into one of the parlors, while she sent for Madame la supérieure. At the moment when she stepped aside, to send a message to that lady, the baker arrived, with a large basket-full of bread, and one of the lay-sisters opened the inner door to receive it. There were circular boxes placed near the door, which were so contrived as to turn on a pivot, so that anything placed in them from outside, might, by means of the box being made to revolve on this axis, be immediately conveyed into the convent. These boxes were called *tourz*, and were generally used for the purpose of taking in the provisions; but, on this occasion, the door had just been opened for Mrs. Brownlow to go out, and the lay-sister took the bread herself from the baker. Mr. Somers was standing unperceived near the entrance, and the uneasiness excited by the unsatisfactory accounts he had received of his daughter, prompted him to seize this opportunity of seeing her. The baker had departed, and the lay-sister, trusting to the portress (whose temporary absence she did not perceive) to shut and fasten the door

bent her way to the kitchen with the bread. Mr. Somers took advantage of the moment, and, hastily darting down the darkest passage, he hurried on, he knew not in what direction.

He had not gone far, however, before he saw a little girl advancing from an opposite direction. She started back with terror at his appearance; but he had recognized Ellen Wilton, and called her by her name. She also recollected him, for he was a friend of her father's, and, coming up to him, answered his earnest inquiries, by leading him to the room where his daughter lay. They, very fortunately, encountered none of the nuns in their progress, and the father had the satisfaction of finding Clara better than his fears had led him to expect. She sprang to his embrace, with a scream of joy, and, with tears and sobs, entreated him to take her from the convent, enforcing her request by a hurried recital of the vexations and persecutions she had endured. Mr. Somers listened with indignation, and this feeling was further increased by his observations on the disordered state of his daughter's nerves, which, he perceived, was the effect of the treatment to which she had been subjected.

It was not long, however, before their conversation was interrupted. The supérieure, not finding him in the parlor, as she had been led to expect, and supposing he was gone, hastened to the apartment of Clara, in pursuance of her new system of conciliation, and was not a little startled at finding Mr. Somers there. Her anger and resentment, at this unaccountable intrusion into the very heart of her hitherto uninvaded sanctuary, were met by his indignant reproaches, on the subject of the violence offered to his child's principles. Clara, terrified by the presence of the supérieure, clung trembling to her father's arm, and implored him not to leave her. The altercation was violent, though short; the lady requested him, in the most haughty and dignified manner, instantly to quit her house; and Mr. Somers, directing his daughter to wrap herself up in her warmest clothing, supported her tottering steps out of the convent, and, having procured a carriage, drove with her to the hotel where he then resided.

Thus unceremoniously was Miss Somers withdrawn from the establishment, and it was not long before another was also plucked from "the net which had been spread for her feet." Mr. Somers, as soon as he had seen his daughter somewhat recovered from her agitation, and comfortably installed in her new lodging, immediately wrote to his friend Captain Wilton, representing the danger to which his daughter was exposed, and urging him to rescue her from it as soon as possible. The result was exactly what might have been anticipated. Captain Wilton hastened to S—, and took his daughter back with him, though without as signing the reasons which induced him to remove her.

Emily and Lydia were truly glad that these two little girls

were, at last, rescued from the snares to which they had been so unreflectingly exposed by their parents; and much and fervently did they wish that those most dear to them were also removed from the fatal influence which was every day becoming more apparent. But, alas! there was as yet no intelligence of Mr. Howard; Caroline was daily more estranged from them, and more devoted to the society of the nuns; and Henrietta and Julia, who were only ten and twelve years old, were as completely under her influence, as she herself was under that of Sophie.

They both felt it a great mercy, that they were permitted to enjoy the society and support of each other;—that they could advise, comfort, and cheer each other on, in the path of humble and consistent obedience, while they strove to exercise a simple trust in the faithfulness of God, and endeavored to “live by faith,” looking “not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.”

They were now but seldom annoyed, either by the nuns or Miss Smithson, on the subject of religion; they had found them determined to admit no authority but the word of God, and as that “sword of the Spirit” was a weapon they were unacquainted with, they had gradually relinquished the contest. Emily and Lydia had often wished they could hear or know something more of sister Adelaide, the interesting novice whose case had excited such lively interest, such deep and heart-felt compassion; but they were now never invited to walk with the sisterhood in the garden, and, without a special invitation, no boarder could intrude. They saw her, indeed, at meals, but always at a distance; they could also see her in the garden, from the window of their bedroom; but they observed that she always walked alone, and as much apart from the others as possible. She seemed fond of solitary musing; her countenance wore an unvarying expression of settled melancholy; and as her cheek became every day more pale, and her aspect more wan; it was evident that her health was rapidly sinking under the depression of her mind. But nothing ever transpired, to throw any light on the mystery of her fate; Miss Smithson, when the subject was referred to, insisted that her evident agony, on the day of her profession, was nothing more than the natural agitation produced by the publicity of the ceremony, and her own conspicuous part in it; and though Emily made several attempts to speak to her, on their leaving the dinner or supper table, such was the system of continual *surveillance* exercised in the house, the vigilance of which seemed even increased with regard to her, that she never could come near the object that so deeply interested her.

Emily and Lydia often noticed the different nuns who were absent from table; some of them remained secluded for two or three weeks together, and, on their return, seemed to have endured

severe penance, if any judgment could be formed from their pale, worn, and haggard looks. Lydia could never notice the absence of one without shuddering; for it was in vain that she tried to forget that an unhappy nun was said to have been starved in the dungeons, not long before the present supérieure assumed the reins of government. Whether true or false, the report had been communicated to them both by Clara Somers and Mrs. Brownlow, and it seemed to be generally believed in the house; and they felt that such things were not only possible, but probable, under a system which bestowed such unlimited power.

But a crisis was now at hand, which they were very far from foreseeing. One morning, a messenger arrived early at the convent, with letters for the supérieure, which seemed to be of no little importance, for she called together a council of the elder nuns, among whom were la mère Sainte Hélène, and la mère Sainte Euphrasie. The intelligence contained in these letters did not seem to be of an agreeable nature, for it made even sister St. Anne look melancholy, and the sweet countenance of sister Constance was overcast with a deeper shade of sadness. Many looks of tender regret were directed towards Emily and Lydia; and they could not help fancying that they were, in some way, concerned in what was going forward, whatever it might be. This was an idea not at all calculated to tranquillize their minds; and they could not altogether suppress the feelings of undefined apprehension to which it gave rise. They, however, endeavored to await with patience the development of the mystery.

Their suspense was at length terminated. After dinner, in the refectory, the supérieure thus addressed the boarders, in the presence of all the nuns.

"It is my duty, ladies, to inform you, that I have this morning been honored with an epistle from our right reverend father the bishop of this diocese, and that this communication concerns you in a particular manner. His Lordship observes, that, from various circumstances which have come to his knowledge, he is convinced of the general inexpediency, and frequent danger of admitting Protestant boarders into religious houses, inhabited by Catholic communities. He, therefore, in his tender love, and fatherly care for his children, has issued a request,—which, of course, coming from such a quarter, is as forcible as the most positive command, 'that no more Protestants be received into the convents of this diocese, and that those who are already inmates in them, be forthwith requested to depart,—unless, indeed, they will consent to listen to the voice of truth, and become members of the only true and apostolic church.'"

"Such being the case, ladies, it is my painful office to apprise you, that it is absolutely necessary that you should, as soon as possible, withdraw from this house, if you are determined still to

persist in your errors. But it also becomes me to entreat you with the most tender and affectionate earnestness, to renounce the fatal ways of heresy, in which you have walked but too long, and to embrace the holy faith of that church whose arms are open to receive you. Oh ! reflect, I beseech you, and do not hastily reject the offers of everlasting happiness ! Let there be joy in heaven, over, not one, but several, repenting sinners ! Consider, that, if you remain obstinate, not only will the doors of this sanctuary be closed against you, but, at the great day of judgment, you will be inevitably excluded from heaven, with these most awful words,—‘ Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels ! ’ ”

“ I will not hear your answer now,” continued the supérieure, observing that both Mrs. Brownlow and Emily were about to speak. “ I entreat you to pause, before you decide, and will receive your decision to-morrow. In the meantime, my daughters and myself will importune heaven with prayers, that the Holy Virgin may give you grace to decide aright.”

The lady waved her hand majestically, as she concluded, as if to prevent a reply, and the boarders, as well as the nuns, retired to their separate apartments. Caroline would have escaped, but Emily and Lydia, each seizing an arm, forcibly detained her, and at length succeeded in leading her to their room.

“ Now, then,” exclaimed Lydia, “ now is the time to confess Christ. A crisis is come, and it becomes us to act with fearless candor, and to show that we are not ashamed of that holy religion which we know to be founded on the pure Word of God. If we are Protestants, now is the time to prove it, by openly and boldly protesting against the soul-destroying errors of Popery.”

The eyes of the animated girl sparkled with enthusiasm as, with her usual impetuosity, she pronounced these words. Caroline was pale and agitated, and evidently the prey of conflicting feelings. Emily could not speak, for she dreaded the result, and her cheek was almost as colorless as that of Caroline. Lydia, however was resolved to obtain an answer to the question, which she saw her cousin durst not, or rather had not the power to ask. She stood before her sister, in an attitude expressive of the most intense earnestness, and holding her hands with an unconscious grasp, exclaimed, as Caroline remained silent.

“ Dearest Caroline, speak, I entreat,—I implore you,—speak, and relieve our hearts of the load of anxiety which has long weighed them down,—speak, and say that you will leave this house with us,—that you will not forsake the religion of the Bible ! ”

Caroline withdrew her hands, and falteringly replied, “ You are too vehement, Lydia ; you must give me time to reflect ; you know we are not to give our answer till to-morrow.”

"Oh! but I cannot bear this suspense," exclaimed Lydia, falling on her sister's neck, and bursting into tears. "I cannot bear to doubt your decision, or to contemplate the possibility of your apostasy! Caroline!" she continued, sinking on her knees, "you will not forsake us, and break our hearts!—you will not bring down my father's head with sorrow to the grave!—you will not endanger your own soul, by embracing a system which is founded on the authority of men, and directly opposed to the sure Word of God!"

Emily supported Caroline, who seemed ready to faint, and with tears endeavored to second the arguments of Lydia. The unhappy girl sobbed with almost convulsive emotion; but at that instant Sister Sainte Anne entered the room, and led her into the garden to enable her to recover herself. There was evidently a contrivance in this well-timed interruption, and Caroline seemed glad to avail herself of it. It was in vain that her sister and cousin sought another opportunity of conversing with her; she was all the day with Sophie, and they therefore resolved to await the hour of retiring to rest, and then use their utmost efforts to recall her to a sense of her duty.

They visited Mrs. Brownlow in the afternoon, to inquire what her intentions were for the morrow, and found her busily employed in packing up her wardrobe, books, and other articles. She told them she intended to leave the house on the following day, and that she had written to a friend, to secure her accommodation in another convent near Paris.

"You, I suppose," she said, "will also leave as soon as you can; but I am not sure that you will take Miss Caroline with you. She seems wonderfully captivated with the nuns, who are not likely to forego any advantage they may have gained. I would, also, advise you to look well to the two little girls; for, if I mistake not, there will be a struggle for them."

Emily and Lydia felt alarmed, and thanked Mrs. Brownlow for her caution. They went in search of Henrietta and Julia; but so constantly did the nuns keep them employed, that they had no opportunity of speaking to them in private.

Thus passed the day, in alternate fears and hopes, tears and prayers. They anxiously watched the progress of the advancing hours, and thankfully hailed the approach of night. The supper hour came, and, after it, the wearisome round of idolatrous worship. The nuns had been in the chapel the greater part of the day, having had a long extra service, for the conversion of the heretics, and they looked fatigued and worn out. The boarders were dispirited, and all gladly retired to rest.

It was eleven o'clock, and every sound had long ceased in the convent, when Emily and Lydia entered the apartment of Caroline. She was not there, and the removal of some of her clothes

plainly indicated that she had gone purposely to sleep in some other room,—no doubt in order to avoid the arguments and entreaties she knew not how to oppose. They felt indignant at the contrivance by which she had thus been induced to avoid her nearest friends; for they doubted not that the infatuated girl had been directed in this action, by those whose interest it was to retain her in the convent.

That night was one of bitter affliction, and sad foreboding, to the cousins. They rose with the dawn, and Emily wrote to Mrs. Fortescue, entreating that kind friend to come as soon as she could, and favor them with her advice. Before the hour of breakfast, the following letter was put into her hand:—

“MY DEAREST COUSIN AND SISTER,

“You must forgive me for what, I fear, you will call an unkind wish to avoid you. Indeed, indeed, I cannot see you at present; I am not able, I know, to refute your arguments, but my conscience forbids me to dissemble any longer. I think the Protestants are mistaken, and that the Catholic church is the only true one. I shall, therefore, remain here, and I entreat that you will not make any further attempts to dissuade me from my resolution, for I assure you I am quite determined. Henrietta and Julia are willing to stay with me, and I wish I could persuade you both to do the same. Perhaps you will say that I have no right to dispose of either my sisters or myself, without the sanction of my father; but he has consented to our coming hither, and we have a right not to leave the place till he commands us to do so. You need not be alarmed about Henrietta and Julia, on the subject of religion. The supérieure has kindly promised that nothing more shall be required of them, than an outward conformity to the rules of the house.

“Adieu, dear, dear Emily and Lydia; may God bless you with the true knowledge of his will. It is better, much better, for us, not to meet for some time; but reassured of the unalterable love of

“Your own affectionate

“CAROLINE.

“P. S.—I hope soon to hear from dear papa, and if you will leave your address, I shall immediately send you information of it.”

Many and bitter were the tears shed by Emily and Lydia, over this letter. There was, however, no remedy for the evil, no hope of extricating Caroline from the toils in which she had suffered herself to be involved. Their only resource was, a final appeal to Mr. Howard, and, if that were not answered, Emily resolved to entreat the interference of her father.

The dinner-hour came, but Caroline did not appear, and as Sophie was also absent, it was most probable that they had been allowed to dine together in private. After dinner, the *supérieure* addressed the Protestant boarders, and politely requested to know their decision, on the question she had proposed to them the day before.

Mrs. Brownlow briefly replied, that she was a Protestant by birth and education, had been one all her life, and that, as she was resolved never to forsake the religion of her country and her fathers, she would depart from the convent on the following day.

The *supérieure* expressed great regret at her decision, and sorrow for the loss of her society, as she had resided several years with them. She added, with great truth, that a Mahometan, or an idolator, could give quite as good a reason for not changing his creed.

She then turned to Emily, who mildly, but firmly replied, that, as she was fully convinced that the Protestant faith was more agreeable to the revealed will of God than any other, she could not, for one moment, think of abandoning it, or even hesitate about doing anything, or making any sacrifice that might be required, to prove her attachment to the Protestant cause. Lydia added, that her sentiments were in perfect accordance with her cousin's, that they expected Mrs. Fortescue in the course of the day, and should then decide on the time of their departure.

The *supérieure* frowned angrily at their answer; but, after a moment's reflection, she smoothed her ruffled brow, and observed, that if they would but be persuaded to examine the subject with unprejudiced attention, she was convinced they would find that they had always been, and were still in error, and would, consequently, be induced to change their opinion. She offered to speak to father Saville, and request, for them, the favor of his instructions,—or to introduce them to an *abbé* of her acquaintance, a man of profound learning, piety, and zeal, whose arguments, she was certain, could not fail of converting them. Emily and Lydia, however, politely, but coldly, declined her offer, and the party broke up without any further conversation.

Major and Mrs. Fortescue called in the afternoon, and heard the news they had to communicate with undisguised indignation. They tried in vain to see Caroline; she sent word that she was too ill to receive any one. They, however, had an interview with the *supérieure*, in which they warmly remonstrated on the influence, and protested against the means which, they doubted not, had been used, to induce Caroline and her sisters to remain in the convent, at the expense of a change of religion.

The lady calmly replied, that no compulsion had been used; that Mademoiselle Howard and her sisters had acted entirely from their own free will, and that, as Major Fortescue was neither

their relation nor their guardian, she did not acknowledge his right to interfere.

The Major felt, indeed, that he had no authority to proceed farther in the business; but, having given the cousins an invitation to their house, he and Mrs. Fortescue departed; and the next day Emily and Lydia removed to their hospitable mansion.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE DISCUSSION.

Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.—*Acts v. 39.*

MORE than a week had elapsed, since their leaving the convent, and Emily, who had left behind her embroidery frame and one or two other trifling articles, took the opportunity of the pretext they afforded, hoping she might, by that means, obtain an interview with Caroline. Lydia was anxious to accompany her, but was prevented by illness; and Emily, therefore, took with her, besides the servant, a little English girl, the daughter of a neighbor of Major Fortescue's, whose amusing prattle would beguile the loneliness of the walk. On presenting herself at the grate, and inquiring for sister Constance, that amiable nun made her appearance, and received her with marks of sincere affection. Emily asked after Caroline, and was told that she was rather indisposed. Anxious to see her, if possible, yet scarcely knowing how to make the request, she spoke of her embroidery, which she had left unfinished, and told sister Constance, there were two or three stitches which she did not quite understand. This method succeeded; the nun paused a moment, then went to consult *la mère Saint Hélène*, and, on her return, told Emily that she might enter the convent.

"I cannot show you how to do the stitches, through this grating," she said, "and, as you have paid for your board and instruction up to next week, and are, therefore, virtually, still a pupil, *la mère* will allow you to enter for half-an-hour. You can leave your little companion in the parlor, and the servant had better go and perform her devotions in the chapel, while you remain with us."

Emily thanked her with sincere gratitude; and having directed little Laura Stapleton not to leave the parlor, and received a promise from the portress that she would watch over her, she gave the servant leave to await her in the chapel, followed sister Constance through the well-known dark cloisters, and once more heard the ponderous inner door shut and bolted behind her.

She had only spoken truth with regard to her work, and was deeply engaged in receiving the last instructions about its completion, when she was accosted by sister Sainte Anne,

"I have been talking to your little companion," said the smiling nun; "she is a sweet child, but feels very much *ennuyée* at being left alone so long. I have gathered her this plate of fruit, to amuse her, but I know not how to put it into her hands. I cannot pass it through the grating, and we are not allowed to open the door, except for ingress or egress. Will you, then, do me the favor to return to the outer parlor, and give her the fruit from me?"

Emily thanked her, and complied with her desire; but, as she did so, she could not help reflecting on this little incident, which, though trifling in itself, was a striking exemplification of the hopeless captivity of a convent. The parlor, to which the sister wished to convey the fruit, was not three feet from the door at which she had stood; it was inside of the convent entrance, and, had she but opened the door, and set one foot over its threshold, she could, with the greatest ease, have handed the plate to the child. But this she durst not do; that door was never more to open for her, and her feet were never again to approach the outer entrance. Emily sighed deeply, as she thought of the apostate character of that church, which imposed such unnecessary and unnatural restrictions, and even held them up to its deluded votaries, as meritorious acts of self-denial, which were sure to secure them an everlasting reward in heaven.

Before she left the convent, she entreated to see her cousins; Henrietta and Julia were brought to her, and sister Constance went to ask Caroline if she would see her. Caroline consented, and Emily was introduced into her bed-room, where she found her suffering from a severe cold. Their interview was affecting, but, owing to the presence of Sophie, no confidential conversation could take place. Indeed, Caroline immediately requested that the subject of religion might not be introduced, and Emily at once perceived that there was no present prospect of any change for the better.

Caroline had not heard from her father, and she expressed the greatest anxiety on the subject of his silence. Henrietta and Julia looked shy, and seemed to shrink from Emily, who saw that the pernicious influence of the system was beginning to produce its usual effect on their minds. When she left them, she earn-

estly requested to be allowed to see them sometimes at the grate; and Caroline, after some hesitation, assented, observing that she should be glad to see her sister also.

As Emily returned to Major Fortescue's, her heart was oppressed with sorrow for the present, and apprehension for the future; and she found it difficult indeed to follow the injunction of the inspired Psalmist, "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Lydia wept bitterly at the account she gave of her visit; but they endeavored mutually to cheer each other with the promise, that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

Emily's spirits were somewhat revived by a letter she received from her friend Rose de Liancourt. They had regularly corresponded, ever since they had left Madame d'Elfort's; but, as the Baron's residence was several miles from S——, they had not had the pleasure of meeting. Now, however, Rose informed her friend that she expected to be at S—— with her father in three days, and dwelt on the pleasure she should experience in again seeing and embracing her beloved Emily. Her friend was equally delighted at the anticipation, and when the meeting took place, she saw with pleasure that Rose was much improved in health, and looked cheerful and happy.

"I am truly so, my dear friend," she said, in answer to Emily's observation on that subject;—"Yes, I am happier than I ever was, and highly favored by heaven. My dear father is all that is kind and indulgent, and thinks so highly of your poor Rose, that he asks her advice on every occasion. My darling Claire improves daily, and is so amiable and docile, that she is a most delightful companion. In short, I should be perfectly happy, were it not for my beloved mother, who, I fear, will never recover her intellects. She is happy, however, in our society, and enjoys the little pleasures and amusements we procure her, with the eager gaiety and delight of childhood. Oh! my dear, dear friend, what numberless reasons I have to be thankful!"

She then told Emily that the next day would be her eighteenth birth-day. "It was for that reason," she continued, "that I urged papa to come to town. I intend to spend the whole day in the church, for I have abundant cause for thanksgiving, and many, many mercies to ask. Oh! if I could but see my dear father converted to God, I think I should scarcely have one wish ungratified."

In this happy frame of mind Emily left her; the subject of religious controversy was not introduced; and on the second day the Baron and his daughter were to return to their *château*. Business, however, unexpectedly detained them, and Emily had the pleasure of spending a few hours with Rose. In this conversation, the latter inquired as to the particulars of Caroline's separation

from her friends, and it was then, after Emily had related the substance of all that had occurred since their leaving Madame d'Elfort's that she learned from Rose several circumstances of which she was before entirely ignorant, and which threw considerable light on many occurrences that had before appeared almost inexplicable.

The reader will remember the case of Madame d'Elfort's servant, who died soon after undergoing a surgical operation, and that Caroline's feelings had been greatly affected on the occasion. The poor woman was buried by the parish, and sister Rose, the *sœur de la charité* already mentioned, having, with unremitted kindness, attended the unhappy sufferer, from the beginning of her illness to its fatal termination, was actively engaged in preparing the body for its removal to the grave, when Sophie Dorville prevailed on Caroline to accompany her, in a visit to the chamber of death. It has been already said, that the *religieuse* was a very lovely young woman, elegant in manners, and peculiarly fascinating in address. She was also very sincere in her extraordinary devotedness, and possessed all that fervor of religious enthusiasm, which is so well calculated to dazzle and captivate the youthful mind. Her words made a deep impression on Caroline; and Sophie, who perceived their effect, thought it a good opportunity to attempt the conversion of her friend.

She communicated the circumstance to her mother, who, with a zeal which did honor to her sincerity, seized every occasion of inviting Caroline to her house, and frequently took her to the residence of the Grey Sisters, where sister Rose did all in her power to deepen the impressions so favorable to their purpose.

This accounted for the extreme emotion betrayed by Caroline, on learning that Emily and Lydia had visited sister Rose. Wavering and undecided, her principles shaken, and her mind unsettled, she shrank, with nervous timidity, from the idea of their knowing it, and was only relieved from her agitation, by ascertaining that nothing relating to her had transpired.

Madame Dorville had taken her several times to visit the Grey Sister; had lent her that eloquent and plausible, but most dangerous work, Châteaubriand's "*Génie du Christianisme*," and several other equally specious books, which had produced the most baneful effects on her mind; and she endeavored to complete her conversion, by employing the abbé Ronceval to bewilder her with his subtle reasonings. A similar attempt had been tried with Lydia, but had been unexpectedly foiled. All these particulars Rose had learned, at different times, from Sophie Dorville; but Emily was sincerely glad to hear, that Madame d'Elfort had known nothing of the scheme, as they were fully aware, that her conscientious adherence to her engagements would prevent her encouraging, or even allowing it. Her opinion of that lady's uprightness of character was, therefore, not shaken.

Rose departed the next day; but Emily soon after received a letter from her, which convinced her that her friend had not given up the hope of her conversion. After several expressions of unabated affection, it continued thus,—

“And now, my beloved friend, allow your Rose again to mention a subject which is still, as it has long been, one of the nearest to her heart. My affection for you, and my anxious desire for your welfare, led me, on one occasion, to infringe the laws of the school, and now compels me again to tell you, how painful it is to me, to know that a person whom I love so tenderly is in error, on so important a point as that of her eternal salvation! How happy should I be, if I could be the means of bringing back to the fold of Christ a strayed sheep, for whom He shed his blood! O my dearest friend! I entreat, I conjure you to forsake a religion reformed by man, and to embrace that which Jesus Christ himself taught us,—even the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, which has existed from the beginning, and will endure unto the end! Pardon me, I beseech you, for saying so much; my heart guides my pen. I have found you so good, so excellent, even under the influence of error—what would you not be under the guidance of truth!

“With regard to myself, I am not at all satisfied with my own conduct. I am becoming slothful and careless. I fear I do not sufficiently know myself: I have too much self-love and presumption. Help me, then, my dear Emily, to understand my own deficiencies, that I may be enabled to overcome them. Write to me with perfect candor, and without fearing to offend me. You have much too good an opinion of me;—in your last letter, you spoke of me in terms which I am far, very far, from deserving.

“Adieu.—Believe me ever

“Your sincere and tenderly-attached friend,

“ROSE DE LIANCOURT.”

Emily answered this request of the amiable girl, by reminding her of the agreement which they had entered into, previous to leaving Madame d'Elfort's; and expressed her willingness to abide by it, if Rose still wished it, and her confessor would undertake the task. She added, that she only consented to enter into a discussion, on the condition which had originally been stipulated,—that Rose should read everything that was written on both sides of the question.

Rose's answer was full of joyful anticipation.

“Monsieur de Beauvais,” she wrote, “who is *grand curé* of the town, and my confessor, is a man venerable for his years, wisdom and piety. His time is, at present, too much taken up with preparations for the jubilee, to allow of his attending to anything else. but he has promised me that as soon as he has any leisure,

which will be in about three weeks, he will write to you on this important subject. In the meantime, he strongly recommends for your perusal a work entitled "An Amicable Discussion, on the subject of the Establishment and Doctrine of the Anglican Church, and the Reformation in general." It is in the form of letters, and consists of two volumes. I beseech you, my beloved friend, lose no time in procuring this excellent book; or, if you cannot get it, I will send it you.

"What happiness for me, my dear Emily, if I could one day hail you a member of the true church! you, my friend, in whom I have ever reposed so much confidence! you, whom I love so tenderly! I hope,—yes, I trust, if you are but candid, that I shall have the joy of seeing you abandon error, and embrace truth! I pray God, with all my heart, to enlighten your mind by His Holy Spirit; for, as you justly observe, without his grace we can do nothing.

"Monsieur de Beauvais has been my confessor ever since I was nine years old. Under his instructions I attended my *première communion*, and he has behaved like a father to Claire and myself. He is so good, so kind, so gentle! When you know him, I am sure you will acknowledge the excellence of his character.

"Your own affectionate

"ROSE."

Having despatched her answer to this letter, Emily waited, with mingled feelings of curiosity and interest, the result of the promise made by the confessor to Rose. She did not, however, neglect the means of preparing herself for the expected contest. She read and searched the Scriptures diligently, especially those parts which bear on the subject; and the more she did so, the more was she convinced, that the doctrines and practice of the Romish church are diametrically opposed to the plainest declarations, and, indeed, the whole tenor of the Word of God. She also consulted some approved works on the subject of the intended controversy; and, above all, fervently prayed to the "Father of lights," that he would guide her by his Holy Spirit, preserve her from all error, and bless the discussion to the promotion of the eternal welfare of her beloved friend.

In the meantime, she and Lydia had seen Caroline once or twice; but there was a reserve in her manner, and a restraint on their conversation, which rendered these interviews extremely distressing. Not a gleam of light seemed to pierce through the gloom, and Mr. Howard's continued silence became every day more extraordinary. But it was, at length, accounted for, and in a manner as melancholy as it was unexpected.

A letter arrived for Emily, signed by sister Constance, inclosing another, which Caroline had received from an English clergyman.

It was dated from a small and obscure town, in the south of Italy, and contained the account of her father's death. The clergyman stated, that he had been travelling for the benefit of his health, and had been induced, by the peculiar beauty of the scenery, to visit this spot, which was several miles out of the track usually pursued by travellers. The people of the little inn informed him that they had a sick guest, a stranger, who had come to them several weeks before, and, they believed, was in a very dangerous state. He had been delirious till within the last few hours, and was now, though sensible, so weak and reduced, that the village surgeon entertained no hopes of his recovery. Who he was, they had not been able to ascertain, as he had come with post-horses to his carriage, and the only servant he brought with him, having been hired at the last town through which he had passed, could give no information about him. All they knew was, that he was well provided with money; and they thought that *il Signor Inglese*, being his countryman, might like to converse with him, and would, from a knowledge of the language in which several papers in his portmanteau were written, be able to inform his friends of his situation.

Mr. Mowbray immediately visited the invalid, and found him indeed in a hopeless condition. He resolved to remain at the inn for the present, with the view of being useful to him; and his hopes were not disappointed. Mr. Howard, though on the brink of the grave, was sensible of the comfort his presence was calculated to give. Though reduced to the greatest weakness, he was able, at intervals, to converse with him, and to communicate his wishes with regard to his family, which Mr. Mowbray took down in writing.

In these instructions, he committed his children to the care and guardianship of his brother-in-law, Mr. Mortimer. It was well for the tranquillity of his mind, that, owing to his having been for the last three months travelling in different parts of Italy, he had not received the letters which Emily had written; but he seemed to have entertained some apprehension on that very subject, from the message he sent to Caroline. In this communication he told her, that he feared he had acted incautiously, in too hastily indulging her wish to become a boarder at the convent. He entreated her, however, as she valued the last injunctions of her dying father, not to decide on any change of religion, without due deliberation, and, above all, not to take the veil till she was twenty-one, but to visit England, for at least three months, before she made any final arrangement, or took any important step.

Mr. Mowbray added, that he had been enabled to exhibit to his dying friend the gospel way of salvation by Christ alone, and had found him willing to listen to it; that he had every reason to believe that Mr. Howard had embraced that salvation, as his only

hope; and that he had had the satisfaction to see him depart in peace.

The letter of sister Constance, in which this communication was enclosed, informed Emily that Caroline had been so shocked, so totally overcome, by this heart-rending intelligence, that she was now lying seriously ill, and the *supérieure* had thought it necessary to call in the physician of the establishment.

No words can describe the state of anguish and distress into which Emily and Lydia were plunged, by this double calamity. It was, however, no time to indulge in inactive sorrow; and they were mercifully enabled to recollect that "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth;" and to take comfort from the assurance that it is "for their profit." Mrs. Fortescue, with her usual kindness, immediately went to the convent, in order to ascertain whether it was possible to have Caroline removed, but was assured that such an attempt would be highly dangerous. She then sought an interview with the physician, who somewhat allayed her fears, by the information that Caroline's illness, being of a nervous character, was not likely to prove fatal, though her recovery would probably be slow.

Emily and Lydia suffered the most intense anxiety, during the three ensuing weeks. To know that Caroline was ill, suffering, and in sorrow, and yet to be debarred from attending, or even seeing her, was a trial that required the utmost exercise of Christian fortitude, humility, and resignation. At last, they were assured that she was in a state of convalescence, but would not be able, for some time to come, to descend to the parlor, in order to see her friends. In the interim, the Major and his lady were going to Paris for a week, and they took Emily and Lydia with them, hoping that the change would tend to recruit both their health and their spirits.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A MELANCHOLY EVENT.

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth.—REV. xiv. 13.

ON their return to S—, the cousins immediately hastened to the convent. They saw Caroline at the grate, but only for a few minutes, and their interview was most affecting. She was pale

and sad, and had evidently suffered much; but there was more friendliness, and less reserve, in her manner, than they had for some time seen, and when Emily informed her that she had written to her father, and was in daily expectation of his arrival, she announced, with a sigh, her intention of complying with Mr. Howard's last wishes, by accompanying her uncle and family to England. Her sister and cousin heard this resolution with pleasure, and began to indulge the hope that she might return to the path she had forsaken.

It was, therefore, with hearts considerably lightened, that they returned to their present abode. A letter lay on the table, directed to Emily, in a hand with which she was not acquainted. As the family were waiting supper for them, she took the letter in her hand, and as she descended to the supper-room, just opened it to look at the signature. It was "De Beauvais, curé de S—," and she reclosed it, satisfied that the subject was not one which demanded an immediate perusal. The Major observed the action, and said, "he was sorry she should be compelled to an act of self-denial."

"It can scarcely be called so, my dear sir," replied Emily, "for the letter is one which can very well wait. It is the long-promised epistle from Monsieur de Beauvais, the venerable priest who has kindly undertaken to make me a convert to his faith."

"Oh!" exclaimed the Major, "is it from the old priest at last? Well I wonder you are not all impatience to read it. I must confess, I am not a little curious to know how he will set about your conversion."

"There can be nothing in it," replied Emily, "that I should not wish my friends to hear. If, therefore, you will take the trouble of reading it after supper, we can all profit by the good father's arguments."

"*Volontiers*," said the Major, and the conversation was changed, by Emily's repeating the substance of their conversation with Caroline, and the hopes inspired by her unusual frankness. Mrs. Fortescue shook her head, and begged them not to be too sanguine in their expectations.

Supper was now over, and the Major took up the letter. It began thus:—

"*MADemoiselle*,

"This is the first time I have the honor of writing to you, and I am truly grieved that this letter should be the means of pouring a flood of sorrow into your good and affectionate heart."

"Oh! give it me, I beseech you!" exclaimed Emily, turning pale, and trembling with agitation; "that fatal letter contains some dreadful news, which I am not prepared to hear!"

She rose from her chair, and with breathless emotion, held out her hand for the letter.

"Nay, nay," said the Major, soothingly, "you alarm yourself, perhaps without sufficient cause. Allow me just to glance over the first page, and, if it contains anything really painful, I will tell you so candidly, and give you back the letter."

Emily leaned against the chair, and, pressing her hands on her throbbing heart, watched his countenance in torturing suspense.

The Major read a few lines in silence, while his open countenance assumed an expression of pity and concern; then, hastily folding up the letter, he said, in a gentle voice,

"I will not read it to you just now; you had better read it yourself."

Emily caught the letter, and, running up to her room, locked the door, threw the dreadful missive on the bed, and knelt down beside it. Her heart had already foreboded its contents; but she durst not trust herself to read it, till, like Hezekiah, she had "spread it before the Lord." Having in a few words of agonized earnestness, implored grace and strength from on high, to enable her to bear the trial as a Christian should, she arose, and, opening the letter with a trembling hand, read as follows:—

"**MADemoisELLE,**

"This is the first time I have the honor of writing to you, and I am truly grieved that this letter should be the means of pouring a flood of sorrow into your good and affectionate heart. Your beloved and excellent young friend is no more! Our dear Rose de Liancourt has gone to receive, in heaven, the reward of her amiable virtues. She was seized, about ten days ago, with a brain fever, which yesterday proved fatal.

"Her death is an irreparable loss to her family, and a subject of grief to all who knew her. You, mademoiselle, were of this number; you loved her; she returned your affection with equal love; and your mutual attachment did honor to both, for it was founded on sympathy of character.

"Before her illness, Rose frequently spoke to me of you. She showed me your last letter, and requested me to answer the questions you proposed. I promised her to do so, as soon as I had some little leisure; but hitherto I have been unable to perform my promise. My time has been absorbed by my ministerial duties, and by other claims on it from without, which admit of no delay. As soon, however, as I am allowed a little rest, I hope to have the pleasure of exhibiting to your view the powerful reasons on which we rest our belief in those truths which you do not acknowledge. Do not fear that I shall seek to deceive you. I will tell you why Catholics believe those things, and you will judge whether they are right or wrong. But, first of all, let us seek help from God. You sincerely desire to know the truth; pray to Him, then, to teach you; for if He do not enlighten our minds, we must for ever remain in darkness.

"There was a doubt expressed in your letter, which, you will allow me to say, has pained me exceedingly. You seemed to fear, that, in the event of your not becoming a Catholic, I should forbid our dear Rose to love you, or to continue to write to you. There is no danger of that, now that your friend is no more; but, were she still living, as I wish from my heart she were, you may rest assured, my dear young lady, that, far from wishing to lessen her esteem and affection for you, I should rather have sought to increase your friendship, and promote your correspondence. I have only the honor of knowing you by what she told me of you, and by your letter, which she left with me; but these sources are sufficient to inspire me with the most lively esteem for your character, and to convince me that your intercourse with your friends can only be favorable to the interests of wisdom and virtue. This, mademoiselle, is the opinion I have formed of you, and which inspires me with those sentiments of esteem and respect with which I have the honor to be,

"Mademoiselle,

"Your very humble servant,

"And affectionate friend.

"DE BEAUVAIS, Curé de S——."

Many and bitter were the tears of sorrow shed over this kind and polite letter of the venerable priest. The ties of affection which subsisted between Rose and Emily were of no common character; they had entwined themselves with irresistible power, round the heart of the latter; they had mixed with her every feeling, so as almost to become a part of her very existence; and it was dreadful,—it was heart-rending, to have them thus suddenly, thus distressingly, torn asunder. Her sobs of anguish almost terrified Lydia; but, after the first irrepressible burst was over, she was enabled to throw herself, in humble faith and resignation, at the feet of Him who has said that "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." She strove to yield her beloved friend into his hands, and to say, with the meek submission of filial confidence, "Not my will, but thine, be done!"

There was something exceedingly dark and mysterious in this afflictive dispensation of Providence. So young, so interesting, so peculiarly gifted with every quality requisite to the formation of a lovely and useful character; the gentle soother of a mother's woes,—the guiding star of her father's affections, whose sweet influence was insensibly leading him back to the paths of virtue,—the affectionate instructress of her youthful sister,—the darling of her family, who beheld in her the pledge of brighter and happier days to the small circle of which she was the centre;—it might have been reasonably hoped, that her life would be spared for great and beneficent purposes. And when Emily recollected

the still more beautiful and interesting features of her character,—that depth and fervor of youthful piety, that conscientious sincerity of motives and action, that unreserved devotedness of heart and soul, to the God whom her anxious spirit panted so earnestly to know,—she wept when she thought of all this, and of the hopes she had indulged, that He who had thus “begun a good work in her,”—would still further enlighten her mind by the bright beams of his Holy Spirit, and fit her for some important work, by which she might glorify him on earth. But “my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

“Sweet Rose!” exclaimed Emily, as her thoughts dwelt with melancholy pleasure on the truly Christian excellences of her departed friend, “thy weary and heavy-laden” soul is now at rest, on the bosom of thy God and Saviour. It was none but Himself who had inspired thee with those deep convictions, which so effectually counteracted the soul-deluding doctrines of an apostate church, and made thee feel that there was no hope of salvation for a sinner, but in His blood and righteousness. And the clouds of remaining error have now been entirely dissipated; thou art now permitted to see Him “face to face” and to “know even as thou art known.” Thy drooping spirit shall no more be weighed down with the burden of sin, or pierced by the thorns of sorrow, or perplexed by distressing doubt, uncertainty, and darkness, “for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed thee, and lead thee to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from thine eyes.”

When Emily had somewhat recovered the shock caused by this unexpected trial, she paid a long-intended visit to Madame d'Elfort; and, knowing with what affectionate tenderness that lady had regarded her beloved Rose, she took with her the letters she had received from her, as also that of Monsieur de Beauvais, feeling convinced that their perusal would be interesting to her friend. In this she was not deceived: Madame d'Elfort thanked her for this proof of confidence, and read the letters with tears of emotion.

“They are just what I should have expected from her,” she said; “dear Rose was, indeed, no common character, and her actions were ever those of a child of God. Our venerable *cure* gave it as his opinion, upwards of a year ago, that she was intended by heaven for some great and uncommon destiny; and most strikingly is his prophecy fulfilled. She is snatched from the sins and sorrows of earth, to enjoy the glories and the happiness of heaven; she has not long ‘fought the good fight’ of faith, but she has already won the victor’s reward,—even ‘that crown of glory which fadeth not away.’”

"That crown, my dear Madam," observed Emily, "can never be the reward of human righteousness. It is the free gift of God; our beloved Rose, I trust, truly and deeply felt this; and she is now among the blessed number of those who 'have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;' and **THEREFORE** are they before the throne of God."

Madame d'Elfort regarded Emily, as she said this, with a look of peculiar meaning; then as if to change the subject, she observed, that it was incumbent on her to call on Monsieur de Beauvais, to thank him for his kindness, in apprising her of Rose's death, and offered to accompany her to the house of the venerable priest. Emily accepted the offer; and, during their walk, her governess acquainted her with some particulars respecting the melancholy event they both deplored.

Some hopes had been entertained of the recovery of Rose; her delirium had subsided; and the fever seemed gradually abating. Her father had been absent, but, having been sent for, had returned with precipitation, and, in the agony of his feelings, flung himself at the side of her bed, exclaiming with vehemence, "Rose, my beloved Rose! my darling child! must I lose you?" The imprudence of this conduct was soon apparent:—the interesting sufferer had been in a quiet slumber, but at this cry she started uttered a shriek of terror, and relapsed into that state of delirium which eventually proved fatal. The wretched father was distracted; but it was a most extraordinary circumstance, that the unfortunate Baroness seemed, on this distressing occasion, to have recovered some portion of her long-estranged reason. It was she who attempted to comfort her husband, and spoke of her daughter as only removed from earth to heaven.

Madame d'Elfort added, that little Claire was very ill; that she had wept incessantly since the death of her sister, and, as she was a very delicate child, serious apprehensions were entertained of her not long surviving her.

By this time they had reached the residence of the curé, and fortunately found him at home. He received them with great urbanity and kindness, and spoke to Emily of her friend, in a way that soon melted her into tears.

"My dear young lady," said he, "your friend was an angel upon earth, and you were indeed happy in the friendship of such a being. Here is your letter, which she put into my hand, and I wish I could give you even a faint idea of the impassioned fervor with which she longed and prayed for your conversion; the earnestness with which she entreated that I would leave no argument untried, that might be the means of leading you back to the fold of the Good Shepherd. This was her last request to me, the last time I saw her, which was only a few days before she was seized with the fatal disorder that terminated her existence. I saw her not after

tant, for the priest of the village near her father's house was called in to administer the last sacraments to the unconscious sufferer; but I had given her my solemn promise, and I shall not fail to perform it, if you will allow me to write to you on the subject. The present is no time to enter on the discussion; but you must allow me to propose one question for your serious consideration: can it be a false religion, whose influence produces such characters as that of Rose?"

Emily's tears and sobs almost suffocated her, and she was totally unable to reply to this subtle question, though she felt, and could have wished to say, that it was a higher and holier influence than that of Popery, which had made her friend what she was. Madame d'Elfort, kindly sympathizing in her emotion, drew her away from the house, and they returned to her own residence.

When Emily was somewhat recovered, she took her into the garden, and unwilling to neglect the advantage which she thought had been gained over her feelings, thus addressed her, in the kindest and most affectionate manner:—

"Permit me, my dear young friend, to add a few words to those which our excellent *cure* has just spoken to you. As long as you were my pupil, you can bear me witness, that I have never interfered with your religious sentiments. But now that our relative situations are changed, the obligation to silence no longer exists. I would, therefore, as a friend, anxious for your spiritual welfare, earnestly and affectionately entreat you to examine the subject with the attention which its importance demands. I neither can, nor will, enter into any controversy with you; but I would beseech you, by every motive that is dear or sacred, not to persist in error. Think of your beloved Rose, and ask yourself, as Monsieur de Beauvais suggested, whether *her* religion could be false? Be assured, my love, that from the mansions of everlasting blessedness, she is now looking down upon you, with celestial love and compassion, and, if she were permitted, would join her entreaties to mine, to persuade you to be happy. Nay, it is no unwarrantable stretch of the imagination, to believe, that she has obtained permission to attend you, as your guardian angel. Think of her, then, as hovering around you now, and fancy that you hear her addressing you in these tender accents:—'O my Emily! my beloved friend! close not your ears, harden not your heart, against the truth! persist not in an error which must for ever separate us!'"

Emily's tears flowed unrestrainedly, during this dangerous speech. Her judgment was not, in the slightest degree, misled by it; she felt that it did not contain one scriptural or solid argument; yet it produced an effect upon her, which must be felt to be understood. It spoke so powerfully to the feelings, that it almost captivated them; there was a speciousness, a fascination in it, that dazzled the imagination, and ensnared the affections. She

felt her reason almost overpowered by the spell,—her mind bewildered and in tumults. She, however, breathed a silent prayer for divine assistance, and was enabled to perceive that her best safeguard against her excited and overwrought feelings lay in maintaining a total silence. She, therefore, durst not trust herself to reply, for she felt that, had she uttered but a single word, that word might have compromised her.

The arrival of Mrs. Fortescue and Lydia happily relieved her from the embarrassment of her situation, and they soon after took their leave, promising to see Madame d'Elfort again, before they left France.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE DEPARTURE.

Be not carried about with strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace.—*HAB. xlii. 9.*

THE next day, to the great delight of Emily and Lydia, Mr. Mortimer arrived, and their departure was fixed for the third day after. He saw Caroline at the grate, but she was sad and reserved, though she promised to be ready to accompany her friends. Notwithstanding this promise, however, the intervening time was passed in great anxiety by Emily and Lydia; but their fears were dissipated, by Caroline's leaving the convent, with her two sisters, on the day before that fixed for their departure.

Emily called for them, and thought it the best opportunity of bidding the supérieure, and the other nuns of their acquaintance, farewell. Their parting with the former was rather polite than friendly, and Miss Smithson bade them a very formal adieu; but the other nuns spoke kindly, and Emily was particularly affected by the manner of sister Constance. As the door opened for Caroline's egress, that interesting nun embraced them all, and the tears started to her eyes. Emily clasped her neck affectionately and whispered, "I hope, my dear madam, that, if we meet no more on earth, we may be re-united in heaven."

"That must depend entirely on yourself," replied the nun, fixing on her a look of melancholy interest. Then, after a pause, she added, "Could you favor me with a few minutes' of private

conversation? I have something to say to you, which I should much like to have an opportunity of imparting."

Emily bowed assentingly, and, requesting her cousins to proceed without her, re-entered the parlor, and was soon joined by sister Constance.

"My dear friend," she said, "I have sought this opportunity, in order to speak to you on the all-important topic of religion. While you were a pupil in the establishment, I refrained from pressing the subject; but now that you are going away, and I may never see you again, I cannot bear the idea that a person I love sincerely should remain in the most fatal of all errors. Allow me, then, to ask, my dear Emily, why are you not a Catholic? or rather, why do you not become one?"

"Because, my dear friend, I do not believe your church to be better than mine;—nay, I do not even believe its doctrines to be agreeable to scripture."

"But you *must* be aware that ours is the only true, Catholic, and Apostolic church; and that out of its pale there is no salvation."

The nun uttered this with evident sincerity, and an earnestness that deeply affected Emily. She, however, answered, without a moment's hesitation,

"This is not the first time I have been told so; but it is my duty to declare that I know of no foundation in the Word of God for such an assertion."

Sister Constance looked at her with unaffected surprise, and said,

"I always thought that you Protestants boasted of your superior knowledge of the Bible; yet, if you read it so constantly, how is it that you do not know its contents? The truth I have asserted is contained in that book, and yet you say you are not acquainted with it."

"I have never seen it there," replied Emily, with energy; "and I can assure you confidently that there is no such declaration in the inspired volume."

"You must be greatly mistaken, for I am equally certain, that the very words I have uttered are contained in the Bible."

"Perhaps, then, you will be kind enough to point them out to me, or to tell me in which part of the Bible they are to be found."

"I really cannot, just at this moment," said the nun, looking considerably mortified, "but, if you will favor me with another interview, before you leave France, I shall be able to prove to you that you are altogether wrong."

"I certainly will come again, dear Madam, since you wish it; and if you can show me the words you have mentioned in the Bible, I shall most readily acknowledge that you are right."

"But, if I convince you of your error, will you be willing to

renounce it? Will you consent to be further instructed in the truth, either by our confessor, Mr. Saville, or by some other priest?"

"My dear friend," said Emily, "I require no further instruction. If you can show me in the Bible, that 'the Roman Catholic church is the only true one, and that out of its pale there is no salvation,' I shall be fully convinced of the validity of its claims to infallibility, and shall be ready to submit to all its dictates."

"Your conversion, then, is both easy and certain," exclaimed sister Constance, while her eyes, usually so sad and dove-like, sparkled with animation and delight. "The passage you want is in the New Testament, and I will look for it, and show it you to-morrow."

"Are you allowed to read the Bible in the convent?" inquired Emily, who had never seen one there, and strongly doubted the permission's being granted.

"Certainly," replied the nun, looking, however, somewhat confused, "we have one in the house, and if you will come to-morrow, I shall be prepared to show you the passage in question, and shall also expect you to fulfil your promise to me."

"Farewell, then, till to-morrow," said Emily, and they parted. Emily felt deeply interested in the conversation which had just taken place, and in the result of the next day's meeting. It was evident that the amiable nun firmly believed in the truth of what she had said. She had, probably, never read any part of the Bible herself, except the few extracts in her prayer-book. How would she feel, when she found that the assertion she had made, and which she had, no doubt, heard repeatedly from others, formed no part of the Word of God? But would she be *allowed* even to look for it? Emily feared not, and she therefore resolved to take with her a French New Testament. She was sincerely attached to sister Constance, and, therefore, prayed earnestly for the divine blessing, on the conversation which was about to take place.

But she was little aware of the constant vigilance exercised in a convent, or of the promptitude of the apostate church, in counteracting everything that might be hostile to its influence.

At the appointed hour, she presented herself at the grate, with a French Testament in her hand. After she had waited some time, sister Constance made her appearance; but she looked hurried and agitated, and had evidently been weeping.

"My dear friend," she said, "I am truly sorry that I have given you the trouble of coming, for I am so very much engaged, that I cannot stay one moment with you."

Emily felt extremely disappointed, and reminded her of the engagement they had made, and the promise each had given the other. The nun, however, though with evident reluctance, persisted in pleading her numerous avocations, and the utter impossibility of her spending even a few minutes with her.

"Perhaps," observed Emily, "the present may be an inconvenient time for you; but, though I cannot come to-morrow, as we are to set out early in the morning, I will return at any hour this evening, if you will only grant me five minutes' conversation. Do not refuse me, dear madam, for it is most probable that we shall never meet again on earth."

The sister was affected, and, after a pause, replied,

"Well, my dear Emily, if you can return at six this evening, I shall strain every nerve to have a few moments' conversation with you."

They parted with this understanding; and, precisely as the church clock struck six, Emily was again at the door.

The portress did not invite her to enter the parlor; but as she withdrew from the door, the pale face of sister Constance appeared at the small grating.

"It is in vain, my dear friend," said she, in a dejected tone, "I cannot give you even one moment."

Emily felt unable to urge her request, but her look of entreaty spoke volumes, as she merely said,

"I have brought a New Testament with me."

The color rushed to the cheek of the nun, and in a hurried, and almost imploring voice, she repeated, "It is in vain,—I cannot speak to you!" Then, in a low and suppressed tone, she added, "I have told *la mère supérieure* how much I wished for a few moments' conversation with you; but it cannot be; I cannot be allowed to speak to you! Farewell! God bless you!" and the tears gushed from her eyes, as she hastily withdrew from the small grating, and the portress drew the shutter across it.

Emily stood for a moment riveted to the spot, with her eyes fixed on the door from which sister Constance had disappeared. She then slowly bent her steps homeward, reflecting on the disappointment she had experienced. It was evident that the nun had confessed, either to the priest, or the inmates of the convent, her conversation with Emily, their intended interview, and its object. She had probably been obliged to ask for a Bible, and the rulers of the convent had become alarmed. They had feared that the prey, so successfully entangled in their net, might struggle to escape, and had, therefore, with the caution so characteristic of their system, wisely resolved to prevent the danger, by forbidding the interview. In what way they had accounted to their victim for the necessity of these precautions, remained, of course, a mystery; but Emily's heart swelled with indignant sorrow, as she thought of the cruel perfidy which marked their conduct, and the melancholy state of spiritual darkness in which the interesting nun was thus retained by their tyranny. They were "blind leaders of the blind;" and she shuddered, as she prayed that they might not "both fall into the pit."

The party set out the next morning, on their return to England, and as their voyage approached its termination, it seemed as if the dark clouds of sorrow and anxiety were gradually yielding to the sweet influence of returning cheerfulness and hope. They arrived in safety, and again revisited the scenes and friends of former days. Some sad recollections unavoidably presented themselves, but, after a time, peace and serenity regained their ascendancy, and it was finally settled, that Caroline should remain at her uncle's house till she was of age, while Henrietta and Julia should be sent to G——, and placed under the care of Mrs. Harley, the excellent and pious governess who had educated Emily and Caroline. Lydia was also to spend a year or two at the same establishment, with a view to the completion of her education, and Emily and Caroline were invited by Mrs. Somerville to pass a few weeks with her. The former gladly availed herself of her father's permission, to accept the invitation; and the latter, after some hesitation, resolved to accompany her.

Great was the sorrow of their kind friends, both at Cliffden parsonage and at G——, to find that the subtleties of popery had thus succeeded in bewildering the mind of Caroline, and that her influence had operated on her two younger sisters, to draw them into the same snare. They resolved, however, in humble dependence on divine assistance, to endeavor to undeceive her, without attempting to put any constraint on her inclinations.

Caroline was, at first, extremely reserved, and adhered, with scrupulous exactness, to all the forms of her new religion. Mr. Saville had given her a general letter of recommendation to the priests of his persuasion, in whatever town she might inhabit, and she had, in consequence, placed herself under the guidance of the priest at G——, who was one of the strictest and most bigoted of his fraternity. By him she was introduced to the chief members of his congregation, who, knowing the character of the family with whom she was now residing, resolved to use every exertion to preserve her from their influence. Mr. Dudley himself watched over his new charge with no common jealousy, and Caroline seemed almost to live apart from her friends, at the very time that she was residing in the midst of them.

There were a few moments, however, when she was more accessible, and, as she found that her liberty was not interfered with, she became gradually less reserved. The hallowed influence of former associations, too, seemed to be regaining some ascendancy over her mind, and her friends began to hope that she would eventually see through the mists of error that had obscured her reason. They thought it best to abstain from argument with her, and gently endeavored to lead her mind to more scriptural views. She gradually suffered herself to be persuaded to join in the prayers of the family, and at length yielded to the entreaties

of Lydia, that she would hear Mr. Somerville preach, in the church she had so long attended. This service seemed to make a powerful impression on her mind; she felt herself, as it were, carried back to those days of hallowed enjoyment when she had hung delighted on the words of the faithful pastor, and "received with meekness, the engrafted word, which was able to save her soul." Again she heard those heavenly instructions, and they sounded in her ears like the sweet strains of long-forgotten music; again she listened to the words of eternal life, from the lips of him who had been the instrument of leading her to God, and some portion of her former feelings rushed back upon her soul. Emily and Lydia saw the tears she shed, and their hearts thrilled within them, in joyful anticipation, and their prayers rose with silent fervor to the God of all Grace, the "Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift."

The next morning, Caroline received a visit from a lady to whom the priest had introduced her. The vigilance of Popish zeal had discovered her crime, in attending a Protestant place of worship, and this lady had been deputed to remonstrate with her, on this flagrant breach of propriety. Caroline felt annoyed by the consciousness of being thus closely watched, but assured her friend that she was true to the church, and had not, even in thought, swerved from her allegiance. But, from that day, there was no more peace for her. Every action was watched, canvassed, and commented on, by her Romish friends, and every opportunity seized, of lecturing and directing her, till she became weary of such unwarranted interference. Her repeated assurances of fidelity to the church seemed to have but little weight, and her impatience under this system of petty persecution did not mend the matter.

All this opposition, however, produced an effect very different from that which was intended. It roused the mind of Caroline to inquiry, and disposed her to listen more favorably to the simple truths of the gospel. Again she read her long-neglected Bible, and prayed for divine illumination to understand its blessed truths. Her friends rejoiced over this promising alteration in her sentiments; but, in the meantime, the priest was not idle. He wrote to Mr. Saville, informing him of the danger in which his new convert stood; and, as soon as time would permit, the last-named gentleman made his appearance at G——. He obtained an interview with Caroline, who was much startled at seeing him. He told her of the anxiety for her spiritual state, which had induced him to undertake a long and fatiguing journey; and so completely did he re-establish his power over her, that she was prevailed on to shorten her stay at G——, and return to her uncle's, where, he thought, she would be less under Protestant influence.

Emily followed her cousin, and the priest also established him-

self for a short time in the town, with the intention of keeping a strict watch over her; and it was not long before he denounced and forbade her intimacy with Mr. and Mrs. Morton. Caroline remonstrated, and represented the impossibility of her thus giving up every one of her former friends; but father Saville was positive, and, imagining that he could carry the point with a high hand, continued to assail her with such constant importunities, that his conduct came to the knowledge of Mr. Mortimer, who felt it his duty to interfere. He accordingly called on the priest, and politely, but firmly, insisted on his ceasing to persecute his niece. Father Saville, however, treated the injunction with contempt, and resolved to follow up his system with Caroline, till he succeeded in prevailing on her to return to the convent.

He had, however, somewhat overrated the extent of a power which was now on the decline; and the violence of his zeal accelerated its overthrow. He discovered that Caroline had again visited Mrs. Morton, and had even so far transgressed his orders as to have attended the church at Clifden, and heard Mr. Morton preach. His wrath was kindled by this circumstance, and losing sight of all prudential considerations, in the vehemence of his zeal, he reproached her for her inconsistency and wavering, in terms so bitter, and with so little regard to moderation, or even the common courtesies of life, that her indignation was at length roused to throw off the yoke of spiritual tyranny. Her eyes had been gradually opening to the errors of the system by which her senses had been captivated, and her better judgment for a time bewildered; and his intemperate conduct severed the remaining link that bound her. She asserted her independence of all priestly authority, and her right to follow the dictates of conscience alone, especially in matters of religion.

The priest was disconcerted, and endeavored to retrieve his error, but found, to his great dismay, that he had lost his former influence, beyond all hope of regaining it. Caroline appealed to her friends, and they thought it best to remove her from the scene of contention. She and Emily, therefore, once more returned to G——, and amidst the religious privileges, and truly Christian society of that place, her mind was gradually strengthened, nourished, and confirmed in the truth. She was led to pray earnestly for divine direction, and experienced the fulfilment of that blessed promise,—“I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.” Often did she look back, with wondering gratitude and adoration, in the way by which she had been led from the perplexing mazes and dangerous errors of a system, which cannot be better described than by the words of our blessed Saviour to the Pharisees, “Ye have

set the word of God at naught by your tradition; but in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Christian Parents! Protestant Parents! bear with me, while I again repeat the warning I have already endeavored to impress on your minds. You are called Protestants; you glory in being the descendants of those who *protested* against Popery, even when it was enthroned in the high places of our land. *They* stepped forward boldly, to assert the cause of truth, endured a long and glorious struggle, for that religious liberty which can only flow from the possession of the pure Word of God, and succeeded in securing that invaluable treasure, though, in too many instances, at the price of their own lives. And can *you* so lightly regard the blessings they suffered and bled to procure for you? Can you deem that danger trifling, which threatens again to bring your children under "the yoke of bondage?" Shall the acquisition of mere worldly accomplishments be put in competition with the dearest,—the most important interests of your helpless children?

It is a delusion to imagine, that no danger can exist, because the heads of Roman Catholic establishments promise not to interfere with the religious sentiments of their pupils. That promise is not always kept; but, even where it is adhered to, as in the case of Madame d'Elfort, with scrupulous fidelity, there are a thousand perils lurking in everything that surrounds the young persons thus exposed. The splendor of Popish rites and ceremonies, so captivating to the warm imagination of youth,—the specious plausibility of Popish doctrines, which they must constantly hear taught and enforced, in the instructions given to their Roman Catholic companions,—the seducing influence of Roman Catholic associations and friendships,—and the numberless fascinations of a religion which appeals, with almost irresistible power, to the senses, and through them, contrives to dazzle and bewilder the mind,—all these are ranged in formidable array, against the yet unfixed and uncertain principles of an inexperienced girl,—and is it a subject of wonder, that they too often prevail?

But, granting that she does not fall into the snare, so far, at least, as a change of religion is concerned,—still, the evils that must necessarily arise from such an education, are manifold and serious. Their principles are unsettled, the Bible neglected, a thousand unscriptural notions insensibly adopted, the sense of the importance of religion gradually lessened, and its place supplied by a spirit of levity, and indifference to spiritual things. Christian Parents! will you expose your children to such evils! Oh! if you value their immortal souls,—if you know the preciousness of that Bible which testifies of Christ, and leads the sinner to him alone, for pardon, peace, and salvation,—if you prize the blessings of a scriptural faith, consecrated and secured by the blood of mar-

tyrs,—if you dread the possibility of your children's being again entangled by that anti-christian system which is designated by the pen of inspiration, "the mystery of iniquity,"—beware, oh! beware, how you trifle with their eternal interests, by abandoning them to its fascinations, and by forgetting the solemn injunction, "COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, THAT YE BE NOT PARTAKERS OF HER SINS, AND THAT YE RECEIVE NOT OF HER PLAGUES."

CRITICAL NOTICE.

(*From the Boston Recorder.*)

THE SCHOOL GIRL IN FRANCE. pp. 248, 18mo. New York:
J. K. Wellman. 1845.

The name of the author of this "narrative addressed to Christian parents and young ladies," is not given. We are assured, however, that "it is not a work of fiction, but a collection of facts, thrown together in one tale, with scarcely any additions, and few other alterations than those which were absolutely necessary, in order to disguise names, places and dates." We have no doubt of the truth of this statement, and cordially wish that the neat and truth-speaking little volume were in the hands and hearts of all who have indulged the thought of placing their children under the instruction of Roman Catholics. The question is a solemn one, and a practical decision of it is to be made by many parents—shall we place our children in the hands of those, who, instead of training them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, will teach them the idolatrous worship of saints and angels, and lead them down the broad way to death, under the pretence of showing them the salvation of God? The style and spirit of the volume, we ought to add, are highly attractive.

LIFE AND MINISTRY
OF
REV. JOHN SUMMERFIELD.

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N. B. We give below the opinions of the press:

We are glad to see this work again. It has often been inquired for, and as often read with avidity and delight. No youthful evangelist ever enjoyed a more enviable popularity than John Summerfield; and it may still be said of him as was said in his native land: "If he be not a star of the first *magnitude*, he is at least one of the first *brilliancy*." Nor are we in the least displeased that this is not a "new life of Summerfield." Mr. Holland has done all that a biographer under his circumstances could do; and the fact that the "Memoirs" ran through five editions within two years of their first publication, is no mean proof of the merits of the work.—*Christian Advocate and Journal, New York.*

The subject of this biography is fervently remembered by the seniors of this generation as a burning and a shining light in their earlier years. His eloquence in the pulpit was paralleled and enforced by his daily walk and conversation; it was eagerly listened to and heeded, and is still treasured in thousands of hearts and its fruits evinced in thousands of lives; it was energetic, unostentatious, impressive; it was the distillation of heavenly purity and Christian love. Deeply attached to his own communion (the Methodist), Mr. Summerfield won the esteem and admiration of men of all churches and the enmity of none; no one regarded him as a minister of a rival church, but all as a Christian and a brother. We are not surprised, but gratified, to see the biography of such a man reach its sixth edition. It cannot be read without profit by any.—*New York Tribune.*

This volume is accompanied with a portrait of the gentle and elo-

quent Summerfield, which is of itself a recommendation. A more attractive countenance is seldom looked upon. The work was composed by the poet Holland, of Sheffield, who was the friend of Montgomery, and possessed much of his excellent qualities. He exhibits great taste, and affectionate reverence for the subject, who was in many respects one of the greatest men of modern times. The present edition has been enlarged by *hundred pages*, by the publication of a number of *Specimens of his letters*, and the reminiscences of his oratory, manner, and character of several eminent men of this country and England. It also plays the peculiarly amiable traits of Summerfield's delightful manner; and as specimens of letter-writing of uncommon excellence.

The work is very neatly printed in large type, and makes an attractive and highly useful volume.—*Nonconformist*.

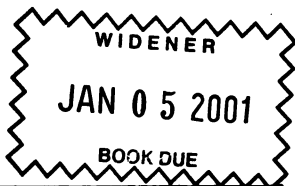
There is an odor of sanctity, a hallowed, sweet remembrance connected with the name of SUMMERFIELD, which makes it difficult to recall his name. "Whom the gods love die young," a heathen maxim, was beautifully illustrated in the death of his spirit. It is almost twenty years since his earthly career terminated—a career how brief—how brilliant! Yet it seems but as yesterday since his persuasive voice was falling upon our ears like music—sounding even now like the rich melody of a bright vision. It was our pleasure to read the interesting Memoir of Mr. Holland in manuscript, before the original publication; but we were not aware, until the receipt of the present volume, that it had gone to a sixth edition. This has been rendered more valuable by the addition of copious selections from the literary remains of the gifted subject.—*Commercial Advertiser*.

The Life of Summerfield by Holland, with an introductory letter by James Montgomery, has reached its sixth edition. The name of this young man is familiarly dear to thousands and tens of thousands, and the sweetness of his seraphic spirit lingers in the memory of many as the recollection of a visit from a dweller in a better land. Not like a comet, but like the morning star, he shone for a brief season above the horizon, then melted away "into the brighter light of heaven," and left behind him a memory fragrant and precious. This volume is embellished with a striking portrait.—*New York Observer*.

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